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JANUARY, 1927

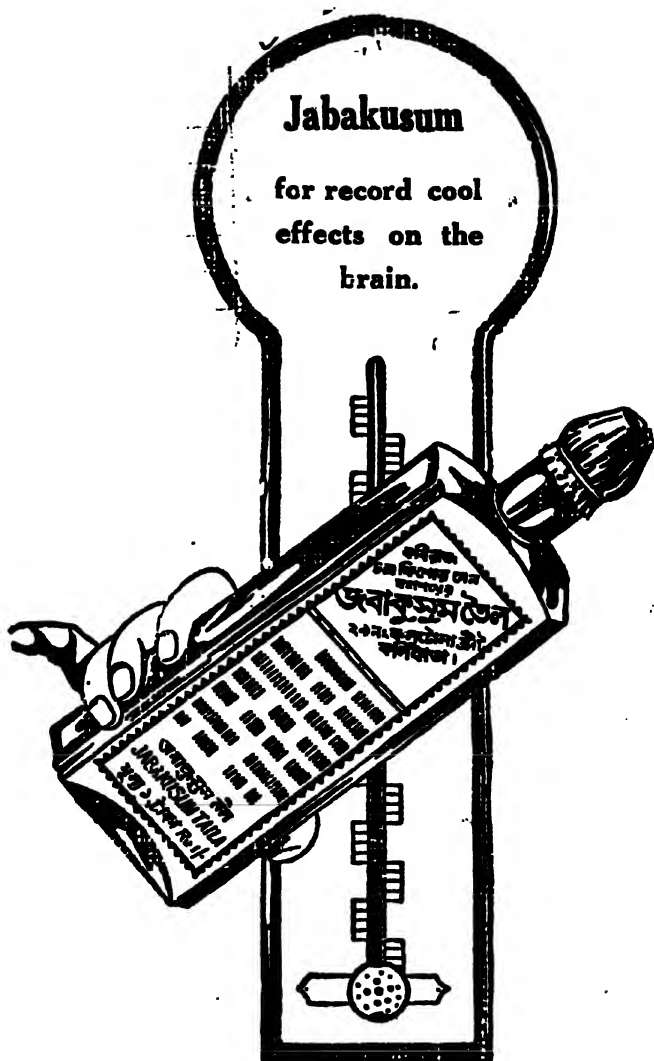


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# Prabuddha Bharata



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राच्य ऋग्वेदोक्तम् ।

Katha Upa. I. ३३. १४.

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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[No. I.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES

11th February, 1921

It was the day following the anniversary festival of Swami Brahmanandaji's birthday. The Swami said in reference to J— : "He came to see me sometime ago. He is a staunch believer in *purushakara*—free-will and free agency. I put the other side, that of destiny, before him. I said, 'We have seen both these aspects, and therefore look upon the Divine will as the stronger factor. You perhaps have not seen failure in life. That is why you are so emphatic about free-will.' But he frankly and naively upheld his thesis. He had come to congratulate us on our works of service. When I said that they were possible through the gracious will of God, he replied, 'No, not through God's will, but through your own efforts.' He remarked that Sadhus have brought ruin on the country by their preaching of Vairagya. But he is a fine man and I like him."



12th February, 1921

The talk this morning turned on N— whom the Swami praised very highly. Referring to Y—, he said: "He wants to put by some money before retiring from the world. The idea of begging one's food frightens him. But then his won't be true renunciation. 'Wander about living on alms.' Begging is holy, it teaches reliance on God. And one comes to feel that all places are His and that one gets only when He gives. One cannot otherwise get rid of fear and reliance on men."

The Swami spoke of D—, how he used to be troubled by a detective. He and the detective were once seated before the Swami, when the Swami said, "Why do you allow him to enter your house? Can you not kick him out?" These words gave D— courage and he feared no more.

"Some are alarmed," the Swami remarked, "at the idea of sharing their things with others. There was a Sadhu who used to live in a forest. To him once came a king seeking God, having renounced his kingdom. The Sadhu became alarmed at this prospective partner of his daily bread. So he said to the king, "You must give up t'l company. Go deeper into the forest where it is perfect solitude." The king took the words in an earnest spirit and left him and retired into the deep forest. In a short while there came a man bearing food for two persons, out of which he gave his usual portion of bread to the Sadhu. The Sadhu found that the man had reserved a gold dish laden with delicacies and asked him whom it was meant for. 'It is for him,' he replied, 'who has been a king.' The Sadhu flared up,—'What! mere bread for me who am so old a Sadhu and all these delicacies for a novice!' The man said, 'I do not know all these. But he who sent me had said that if you are not satisfied with the bread, you may take to the scythe.' The Sadhu had been, before he renounced, a grass-cutter. The idea was that if he and the king did not feel content with their present life, they might go back to their old occupations, the Sadhu to grass-mowing and the king to his kingdom. Why then should not the king be carefully served?"

"This is a fine story, profoundly significant.

"It was in the first days of the Shanti Ashrama. The railway station nearest to the Ashrama was fifty miles off, and the nearest neighbour, a postmaster, five miles. Water had to

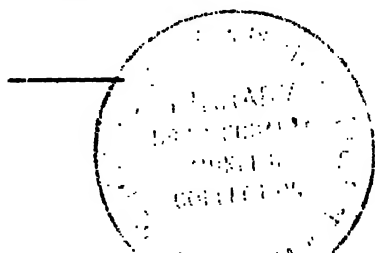


be carried up in barrels from a place three miles distant. When I observed these conditions I felt extremely dejected. How, I thought, could about fifteen people live in a place like this? Anxious thoughts filled my mind in the morning. At night I had a kind of vision in which I saw a mother-bird feeding her young as described in the *Chandi*, and I was given to understand that the Mother had pre-arranged everything. Next day came a friend of one of the party, who was a water-diviner.

"In the meantime I had a good rebuke from a lady member for my anxiety, who said that I had less understanding than even 'Baby' inasmuch as I had no faith in the Mother. 'Baby' was the name given by Swamiji to a very devout girl. The rebuke seemed to me to have come from Mother Herself. It so happened that the water-diviner returned after two hours' stroll in the Ashrama grounds and reported that there were as many as three sources of water there. The nearest source was chosen, and he dug a little and discovered a fine spring of water. And thus everything was gradually all right in the Shanti Ashrama.

"It is He who is doing everything. Only the One exists, none else. It is extremely difficult to see 'the Atman in all things and all things in the Atman,' and 'God as existing equally in all beings.' We talk glibly about it and preach it to others. But how very hard to practise it! Everything is within us. Joy and sorrow have no objective existence. We project joy from within us and associate it with certain things....

"The Jnani speaks and thinks of the 'I' as identical with the Atman. We identify it with the body. To perceive the Divine in one's consciousness is nothing but merging the ego in the Atman. 'As pure water poured into pure water, becomes the same, so becomes the self of the sage, O Gautama, who knows the unity of the Atman.'"





## NORTHWARD HO !

BY THE EDITOR

On the threshold of the new year, to our readers and sympathisers, greetings! *Prabuddha Bharata* also enters now the thirty-second year of its life. How we would like to feel that its life has not been in vain! It was about twenty-eight years ago that Swami Vivekananda brought it from Madras to this Ashrama in the heart of the Himalayas, and blessed it saying :

“The world in need waits, O Truth !  
No death for thee !  
Resume thy march,  
With gentle feet that would not break the  
Peaceful rest, even of the road-side dust  
That lies so low. Yet strong and steady,  
Blissful, bold and free. Awakener, ever  
Forward ! Speak thy stirring words.”

Our great Leader's behests have ever been before our mind's eye as we have worked from year to year. Yet perhaps we have failed to rise to the noble heights whereon the Swamiji placed our ideal. Maybe we have sometimes faltered and have lacked that “untiring strength which is Infinite Love.” For, though the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. But amidst all these the Swami's great blessings have been our unfailing inspiration. And often perchance we have brought light into darkness, filled the desolation of despair with roseate hope and infused strength into flagging spirits. Of these our readers alone can tell. We are content with doing our best. We have tried to sound the unvoiced longings of our readers and responded to them in the light of wisdom that has been vouchsafed to us by the great seers, “the fathers of the race.” Our work has not been easy. It has been our fate to walk against the prevailing current of thought. The Western civilisation that the British occupation imported into India has been scarcely a blessing. It came at a time when the national consciousness



was tired after its gigantic labours at assimilating the Islamic culture. And it was so sudden in coming and so unfamiliar ! For years we lay dazed under the passing whirlwind. And it is only lately that the awakening has come with efforts at regaining the lost balance. That critical attitude and deep historical sense with which the vanquished should face the dominating culture, were sadly wanting and are even now rare. Ours has been a struggle against this obstinate apathy and ignorance.

But we do not despair. We have faith in the future. We *know* India cannot die, she has yet to fulfil great things in the life of humanity. And we shall be unsparing in voicing the truth for which India lives, the message of the spiritualisation of life. We shall tirelessly repeat our warnings to our West-infatuated countrymen till the true glory of India is revealed to their vision and the nation comes into its own.

We do not look upon our nation as an irreconcilable element in the scheme of humanity. We are the only people who are national and yet international. For, the ideals of our nation are the same as those of humanity, and by being truly national we become also truly international. And no nation can fall in a line with the larger movements of internationalism unless it makes its ideals purely spiritual. Anything less than that would be prejudicial to the realisation of the brotherhood of men which is the brightest dream of the age. Our plea to both our eastern and western readers has been the same : Be truly spiritual, wherein lies both individual and collective salvation. No greater message can we conceive of in this juncture of history than the call to the life and the truth of the Spirit. All our present complications are traceable ultimately to the neglect of our spiritual nature. We stand on the widest basis of spirituality, on which alone the diverse nations of the world can be made one. And surely ours cannot be the voice of one crying in the wilderness.

As we write these lines, the snows are falling, falling steadily around us in the midst of a preternatural silence. The hills have become all white and the plants are covered and overlaid with the white flakes. There is not the slightest breath of wind, and the silence is so profoundly deep that we seem almost to hear the whispers of the gods, and to gaze on



the effulgent white form of the Great God Shiva in the innermost depths of meditation. We are no longer on the earth, we seem transported into the very heart of the Absolute! Wonderful these Himalayas, sublime and transcendent! How we wish our readers could be with us at this moment to drink deep of this supremely spiritual experience! For, verily the Himalayas are a symbol, a symbol of the secret essence of India! Where indeed is a place more sacred than these sacred mountains where the Lord of Eternity dwells for ever? "This is the land in which was born Parvati, the Mother of India. This is the holy land, where every ardent soul in India wants to come at the end of his life, and to close the last chapter of its mortal career. On the tops of its mountains, in the depths of its caves, or the banks of its rushing torrents, have been thought out the most wonderful thoughts, a little bit of which has drawn so much admiration even from foreigners and which has been pronounced by the most competent judges to be incomparable. This is the land where rishis lived and philosophy was born." Yea, every inch of these mountains is holy. The very air is surcharged with spirituality which even the most obtuse mind can tangibly feel. The attractions of the chequered plains seem insipid before the soul-enthraling beauties of this Abode of Shiva. What sojourner in these mountains has not felt the calming influence of their sublime grandeur? Even the most turbulent heart softens at their unseen touch and feels as it has nowhere felt the truth and reality of things spiritual.

It is impossible to describe adequately the variegated charms of these great mountains upon whose crests, "exultant, bold and free, is stamped the imprint of eternity." There is no end to their beauty by day or by night. One described these hills once as the very person of Shiva enwrapped in the beatific vision of the Eternal. So indeed one perceived them in a moment of transcendental vision. The premier poet of India called the Himalayas *devatatma*, "God-souled." Verily we seem, as we look on their sky-kissing crests rising tier after tier, calm and majestic, and breathe their cool and fragrant air, almost to sense God. The forests of pines and deodars; the seasons of flowers, with their feasts of rhododendrons, cosmos blossoms and roses; the infinite number of song-birds, one of which comes every summer to our Ashrama to remind us of



our wasted hours by reiterating in an unwearied song, *tumi kee kacheho goh*—"what are you doing"; the placid view of fleecy clouds sleeping in the mornings among the blue mountains, sometimes shrouding the hills and defiles in grey mists and again falling in continuous torrents for hours, till innumerable cataracts flow in booming waters from every summit and the hills echo *Har Har Om, Har Har Om*; then the sudden coming of the autumn, which the Vedic rishis evidently dwelling in the Himalayas declared of yore to be the queen of seasons, for, verily then the sky is suddenly cleared of all clouds, the blue assumes its gladdest tint, the sun becomes golden, and all nature laughs in the serene content of leafy luxuriance, and flowers of variegated hues bloom in millions and the hill-sides look like the embroidered scarf of the queen of the year; by and by the deepening of cold with the searing and falling of leaves and the hills appearing splashed all over with green, yellow, russet and red; and at last the advent of the grim winter with its cutting blasts and freezing sleet, its hails and snow-falls subjecting the mountains to austere restraint and ascetic discipline; and the return of the spring with its warming breath and song and flowers;—all these and many more, who can ever do proper justice to their beauties? They make one their willing captive and the throbbing heart is thrown under their magic spell. Yet the seen is but a fraction of the unseen, and the unseen can be felt only in the silence of the soul.

The long range of snows, spread before our window for a continuous three hundred miles, is a magic field of colours. Scarcely does the dawn peep through the dark upon our side of the mortal world when the snow-mountains flush light pink. And lo! in a few moments the pointed crest of *Trisul*, white and burnished like a silver tabernacle, is shot with dazzling fire, and in a trice the whole range is flooded with gold. Then as the sun rises high, the snows grow whiter and whiter, looking the very emblem of Divine purity and majesty against the deep blue of the sky. By and by the day declines and the evening sun enwraps them with its golden rays and the golden mountains hang between heaven and earth like a mystic dream become real.

Yea, this golden vision is not of this earth. It is the symbol of the Divine in His serene and playful moods. To



the ancient seers as they looked on it, and to those who have heard the call of the Eternal, it is the vision of Shiva eternally united with His Divine Consort, Parvati. The austere and pure white—this is Shiva, and the golden flush that animates it is Parvati Herself. And our soul kneels in adoration before the beatific revelation of our Eternal Father and Eternal Mother, and we sing with the great Sankara :

“O Mother, thou grantest refuge to thy hapless sons,  
O Father, thou destroyest the universe with thy mad dance.  
O Mother, thou createst the joys of life, but thou, O Father,  
destroyest them with the burning gaze of thy wisdom-eye.  
O Shivâ, our salutations to thee, O Shiva, to thee our salutations!

“Thy person, O Mother, is of the hue of the golden *champak*, and thine, O Father, is camphor-white. Thy locks flow in profuse curls, O Mother, but thine, O Father, are matted. To thee our salutations, O Shivâ, O Shiva, to thee our salutations!

“Thy hair, O Mother, is black like the darkest cloud, thy body, O Father, is smeared with white ashes. O Shivâ, thou art the mother of the universe, and thou, O Shiva, art its father. To thee our salutations, to thee our salutations!

“O Mother, thou art the eternal companion of Shiva, and thou, O Father, art the eternal companion of Shivâ. O ye Inseparables, to ye our salutations, our salutations!”

And Swami Vivekananda placed *Prabuddha Bharata* in the cradle of these mountains and uttering solemn benedictions :

“Then start afresh  
From the land of thy birth, where vast cloud-belted  
Snows do bless and put their strength in thee,  
For working wonders new. The heavenly  
River tune thy voice to her own immortal song ;  
Deodar shades give thee eternal peace.  
And all above,  
Himala's daughter Umâ, gentle, pure,  
The Mother that resides in all as Power  
And Life, who works all works, and  
Makes of One the world, whose mercy  
Opes the gate to Truth, and shows



The One in All, give thee untiring  
Strength, which is Infinite Love."

Those blessings have not been in vain. Yes, we have felt the Himalayas to be our unfailing inspiration. They have been before us as a perpetual reminder of the supreme ideals of India and of life, for the Himalayas are indeed the image and symbol of spiritual ideals. For, what are India's ideals? What is the keynote of the music of her life? The call of the Infinite, the quest of the Beyond, of the Spiritual as the only ideal—this has been the eternal burden of her song. To seek and realise God, that is the aim towards which she has directed all her efforts, individual and collective. No man or nation can strive after and have *all* things. One cannot serve both mammon and God at the same time, one must choose between them. And India made her choice once for all on some blessed day in the ancient past and installed God on the altar of her worship, and prepared herself to forego, if need be, the comforts and profits of earthly things in fealty to her Divine ideal. Not that therefore she denies earthly prosperity to *all* equally. In her scheme of life, realism and idealism have each their legitimate place. Her *Varnashrama Dharma* has conceived life as a travelling onward through the experiences of life to its final denial. For life's experiences have their ultimate value in revealing the futility of themselves and the glimpse of That which is beyond life. So India does not deny life in the ordinary sense. It rather enjoins everyone to strive and struggle and gain according as one's nature, *swabhava*, prompts, but always with the restraining consciousness of the ultimate ideal. Life is therefore, in the Indian conception, both *bhoga* and *tyaga*, but ultimately only *tyaga*. *Tena tyaktena bhunjithah*—"enjoy it through renunciation." This is the fundamental principle of the *Varnashrama dharma*. Human nature must express itself in action. To deny nature is to stunt it, not to annihilate it. It has been found to conform to four fundamental types, Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, each of which has its characteristic tendencies and congenial activities. They must be allowed free scope to work out these tendencies in fit actions. But mere expression is not beneficial unless it is in the right direction. Therefore actions must be moulded by *samyama*, in reference to the ultimate ideal of spiritual self-



realisation, the realisation of the Divine. The whole life is therefore, consciously or unconsciously, a quest after the Divine realisation, and all experience and action must be subsumed under that ideal. The ideal must be maintained intact at all costs, even at the sacrifice of material interests. And so India has held to her ideal through weal and woe, through sunshine and storm. Hers has not been always an easy and smooth career. Great disasters have sought to strangle her life. Alien ideals have often sought to estrange her children from her. And she has seen her sons and daughters reduced to the worst straits because of their love for her and her ideals. But she has patiently endured all these till the sun has shone again and God has smiled and her sufferings have been rewarded by an abundant increase of her original strength. She has never faltered in her faith in her God-appointed ideal.

Not only in her own home has she consolidated her ideal, but she has also carried her message of spiritual self-realisation and the power, peace and joy thereof, to lands far beyond her borders; and almost the whole of Asia bears eloquent testimony to her loving ministrations to her less fortunate sisters. She sent out in every age legions of her children to preach the spiritual evaluation of life to peoples entangled in the meshes of lesser considerations. She preached the ideals of God-realisation, the spiritual integrity of man, peace, love, service, non-violence and renunciation as the only worthy ends to be pursued by mankind. And wherever her messengers went, life was made more ample and perfect by their instructions and example, nobler ideals prevailed and an unwonted sweetness and purity permeated thought and action. The outlook was changed not under the aggression of the new thought but as a fulfilment and expansion of the original outlook. "Her influence has always fallen upon the world like that of the gentle dew, unheard and scarcely marked, yet bringing into bloom the fairest flowers of the earth." For, to the bearers of her message, the message was not a verbal affair, but one of their own inmost experience. Behind their words and deeds were the living realisations of their teachers and themselves. They gave out of the fulness of their heart. Had they not seen their Masters giving themselves away for the love and service of others? Had they not found in the passion of that self-sacrifice the acme of spiritual



wisdom and the pinnacle of self-realisation? So that impelled them out of themselves to go far and wide and act likewise, to water barren soil with the blood of their heart. Their thought, word and action all proclaimed the vanity of earthly pursuits and the reality of the Spirit.

Nor is this all that she has done for her step-children. She has gone out to help them, but she has with still greater self-sacrifice, allowed the savage and the turbulent, the civilized and the semi-civilized, the trampled and the arrogant, of all colours and creeds, to enter her hospitable home that by living within her steadying and purifying spiritual precincts, they might be reborn into a better and more glorious life. What a long story of martyrdom has been hers from the dawn of history up to the present hour! They came in hordes, mad with the lust of blood and plunder, pillaged her temples and townships, laid smiling lands waste and wiped off all marks of culture and refinement. The mother of nations patiently bore these inflictions. And slowly her patient love bore fruit in the toning down of their savage nature. Lo! in a few generations, the turbulent are filled with the sweet wonder of a new life and revelation. They see glimpses of another world infinitely superior to their greediest dream. And to-day they, in the same line with India's ancient hosts, are wending their way along the path of life's pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Divine. Was the patience of our great mother due to weakness and lack of power to repel? Do we not see that the moment a strange race or culture enters her sacred precincts, she goes about, alert and wide-awake, preparing for effectively encountering the visitors? No, she does not order out a military general. She sends out a prophet, a spiritual marshal. She sleeps not nor is she weak. It is a blasphemy to think this way of our great mother. She has her own way of encountering the crises of history. Have we not seen how long before *we* even scented the danger of the impact of western civilisation and its disintegrating effect on our national culture and outlook, India brought forth in Sri Ramakrishna the leader and the general who would fight her battle to victory? If India were really weak, could she produce Sri Ramakrishna or Swami Vivekananda? Therefore let us not forget where our strength truly lies and seek for it in unaccustomed places. This is not our way. Our way is always open to us and no power in heaven or earth can



ever block it. Political depressions were necessary, for otherwise the foreign nations could not come to India's hermitage to learn their spiritual lessons. India stands for the Aryanisation, that is to say, spiritualisation of all people. Therefore all must come, east or west, north or south, to mingle among her children and realise the only true unity, the spiritual solidarity of mankind. Therefore India bows low from time to time to let the new hosts pass in. This is the inwardness of India's political subjection. This is not to her shame. Shame indeed, a great shame will it be, if her sons and daughters forget the one aim, the one purpose, of their life, its spiritualisation.

These sky-kissing white peaks of the snow-mountains tell us ever of the eternal goal of India. As they stand in their awful majesty and austere grandeur, they remind us of the unchanging and adamant nature of the motif of India's life, and our knees bend down in adoration. To look on them who stand like guardian angels overlooking India's plains, is to be perpetually filled with the intense truth of India's spiritual ideal. And as the rays of the sun envelop them with their golden splendour, we seem to feel that India's life with all its varied activities and aspirations has ever behind it the stern reality of the spiritual life. The golden mist comes and passes anon, but the white majesty ever remains. So also life's experience with all its vicissitudes comes and goes, but India knows and declares that behind the passing show of life, lies the Real, the truth of the Spirit, whose realisation is the only end towards which all efforts must stretch themselves. This is the eternal warning of the Himalayas. And this is the message which the great Swami laid on us to declare :

“And tell the world—

Awake, arise, and dream no more !

This is the land of dreams, where Karma

Weaves unthreaded garlands with our thoughts,

Of flowers sweet or noxious,—and none

Has root or stem, being born in naught, which

The softest breath of Truth drives back to

Primal nothingness. Be bold, and face

The Truth ! Be one with it ! Let visions cease,

Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,

Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.”



There is a tradition among the Hindu monks that they must ever travel northwards till they have lost themselves in the sacred silence of the Himalayas. Yes, our life is a journey northwards. From the plains and jungles of life's multiple experience to the calm snow-peaks of unitary consciousness, from worldliness to the world beyond—that is the one infinitely long journey along the chequered path of life and death, till we reach the Kailash of Self-realisation wherein dwells the Great God, Shiva Mahadeva, enshrined in the Silence of Eternal Peace and Blessedness! Om Shantih! Shantih!! Shantih!!!

## **THE IDEALS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION.\***

By PRINCIPAL, KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA, M.A.

Rajendra College, Faridpur, Bengal

It is in obedience to the wishes of His Holiness the Swami Shivananda Maharaj, the head of the Ramkrishna Math and Mission, that I venture to rise before you this afternoon to offer a few observations on the aims, ideals and activities of the Mission and at the same time to place before you a few suggestions for its expansion and improvement. I feel it a rare privilege to participate in the deliberations of this august assembly for a parallel to which we cannot think of anything less than the first Buddhist Council convened at Rajgriha in the remote past immediately after the *mahaparinirvana* of Lord Gautama of hallowed memory. The parallel cannot be to anything less than this, for it is my deliberate conviction that Ramkrishna and Vivekananda are the heralds of a new era in the history of mankind such as Lord Buddha was about two millenniums and a half ago. It is they who have revealed to me the Truth which I “searched with many sighs” and that I am proud to call myself a Hindu to-day is due entirely to their message and lives. They it is who have instilled a new spirit into the palsied

\* Author's own slightly amplified English version of the Bengali address delivered by him at the public meeting of the first Convention of the Ramkrishna Math and Mission held at Belur on the 3rd April, 1926.—Ed. P. B.



heart of Hinduism—and I firmly believe that if the Hindu wants to rise again after centuries of torpor then he will have to stand under the banner unfurled by Ramkrishna and Vivekananda. The religion of the Hindu can be a living reality exactly in proportion to the inspiration he derives from their example. The centres of their creative energy are these Maths and this Mission. As long as these will remain healthy and strong, so long the Hindu will hold his head high, his life will vigorously grow, he will be in the vanguard of civilisation and confer untold benefits on mankind by distributing his spiritual wealth from one end of the world to the other, irrespective of caste, colour and creed. It is this duty that he discharged in the past. Earth-grabbing and exploitation never besmirched his name.

The signs are very hopeful indeed. Only thirty-two years have elapsed since the memorable session of the world's Parliament of Religions at Chicago ; yet already not only a few Vedanta Societies have been established in America but a veritable Hindu Temple at San Francisco is an accomplished fact. Here is the first missionary enterprise of the genuine Hindu outside India since the close of the era of Buddhist missions. A momentous event like this has not happened in the history of Hindustan in the course of about a millennium and a half. Hundreds of men and women in the western world have embraced with enthusiasm the doctrines of Ramkrishna-Vivekananda and after the passing away of the illustrious Swami his fellow-monks and disciples have been preaching the Religion Eternal in the West with a zeal which is the admiration of the world. This propaganda in foreign countries is what the Swami called his Foreign Policy. How inestimable is its international value is known to all acquainted with the reports and organs of the Ramkrishna Mission.

Such extensive and intensive propagation of a faith in a period so brief beats all record in history. No political power stands behind this missionary movement such as stood behind the spread of Buddhism and Christianity. It has never had to depend on any aid that is extraneous and adventitious. It stands firmly on its own feet and is great in its own glory. The secret of its expansion is its inherent strength. That tremendous spiritual force which, manifested in the previous avatars, revived India age after age whenever a danger was impending, manifested itself once more in Ramkrishna-Vivekananda to raise her



from a fall before which all her previous falls shrink into insignificance. The centre of this spiritual force is the Ramkrishna Math, the nursery and training-ground of learned Brahmacharins and Sannyasins of a character bold and intrepid—Brahmacharins and Sannyasins who through the grand organisation of the Ramkrishna Mission are foremost in the service of humanity. In its wider sense the Mission includes all the Maths and Ashrams with their propagandistic activities but in its narrower sense it means only those institutions, educational and philanthropic, so well known to the world. Though no hard-and-fast line of demarcation is drawn between the Maths and the Mission, yet the distinction just noted we had better bear in mind to be able to understand the relation between the Maths proper and the Mission as it is ordinarily understood. The soul of the Mission in its narrower sense is the Math and the soul of the country lies in the educational and philanthropic institutions of the Mission. The future of the country is quite assured as long as the ideals of the Maths and the institutions of the Mission remain unimpaired. This is the Domestic Policy of the great Swami Vivekananda. His Foreign Policy and Domestic Policy together constitute what the spiritual hero has designated his Plan of Campaign. It is for the worthy monks who have renounced all and dedicated their lives to the cause of their Master to discuss the internal affairs of the Maths and Ashrams. It will be my endeavour to discuss everything else in connection with the Ramkrishna Mission.

Though my proper subject is as stated above, yet I may be permitted to say this much about the Maths and Ashrams that these noble institutions are very efficiently conducted. Competent Sannyasins are skilfully trained here for preaching the message of their Master at home and abroad. The Brahmacharins and Sannyasins belonging to these Ashrams are very ably editing the excellent Bengali monthly, *Udbodhan* and the excellent English monthlies, *Prabuddha Bharata* and the *Vedanta Kesari*.\* They are also editing the *Morning Star*, an English weekly and three more papers in three different Indian vernaculars, namely, the *Samanvaya* in Hindi, the *Prabuddha Keralam* in Malayalam and *Sri Ramakrishna Vijayam* in Tamil. Besides they have already created and are still creating a vast

\* Another English monthly, *Voice of Truth*, has been recently started from our Kuala Lumpur, F. M. S. Centre.—Ed., P. B.



religious literature which to many is the solace of life and solace of death. Knowledge is assiduously cultivated in the Maths and Ashrams, the libraries attached to them are steadily expanding, and I have every reason to believe that these libraries will soon assume dimensions large enough to fully satisfy the intellectual needs of the monks and neophytes. Outside India four chief centres have been opened at New York, San Francisco, La Crescenta and Boston in America with several branches affiliated to them and one such Ashram has also been established at Kuala Lumpur in the Federated Malay States, another quarter of the globe. At Boston,† the Athens of America, is published the *Message of the East*, an ably conducted monthly periodical and it is the Boston Centre again that publishes many books and pamphlets on the Vedanta philosophy. The achievement of the Ashrams so far is very gratifying no doubt and cannot but fill every Hindu heart with pride and joy, but still a great deal more has to be done as otherwise the need of India and the world will not be fully satisfied.

From the propagandistic side of the Ramkrishna Mission I come now to its humanitarian activities which have proved such a blessing to the country. The Maths or the Ashrams are meant exclusively for the Brahmacharins and Sannyasins but this branch of the Mission is a department open to all. The chief function of the Sannyasins here is to co-operate with the laymen, to keep constantly before their eyes the true ethics of work—the lofty ideals of renunciation and service, to educate them in system and method and after taking the initiative to see that everything passes smoothly ; or, in other words, to put it in a nutshell, the aim of the Mission is to build up a nation of strong and selfless character through the discipline of true work. The humanitarian activities of the Mission are of two kinds. Under the first head comes the work of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and nursing the sick and under the second head that of imparting sound education on a religious and moral basis to the youths and maidens of the country and also affording regular help to the poor and deserving students. Under the first head again there are two sub-heads—permanent institutions and temporary

† Now at La Crescenta.—Ed., P. B.



measures. Of the permanent institutions, the admirable *Sevashram* at Benares deserves special mention. Temporary relief centres are opened in times of unforeseen calamities and they are closed when these calamities are over. The thoroughness and zeal with which the Ramkrishna Mission relieves the distress of people afflicted by famine, plague, flood and cyclone at different times in different parts of India are well known to all readers of newspapers. It may be said without the least fear of contradiction that before the establishment of the Ramkrishna Mission noble work like this had never been undertaken on such a scale by any man or body of men in the British and Muhammadan periods of Indian history. It is just as it should be. From whom else to expect service so arduous and loving unless it be from the children of Ramkrishna-Vivekananda? It is a very happy augury no doubt that other philanthropic organisations have been recently formed by other bodies of men inspired by the example of the Ramkrishna Mission.

The second humanitarian work of the Ramkrishna Mission is educational. The educational methods and ideals of the Mission differ widely from those obtaining in the ordinary schools of the land. Secular knowledge is imparted in intimate relation to religious and moral culture. The students live in constant touch with their *gurus* who are all men of noble character. The lessons of the books are made living and special attention is paid to physical culture combined with practical training in agriculture, arts and industries so that the students may be self-supporting and self-reliant after the course at school is finished. There are orphanages and boarding-houses for boys without means. There are night schools and free schools for the depressed classes and working men. There is again an important Students' Home at Calcutta. The largest educational institution of the Mission has been established at Madras at a cost of several lakhs of rupees. The Vidya-pith at Deoghar also deserves special mention. The number of schools for boys and young men maintained by the Ramkrishna Mission is twelve in number.

Of Girls' Schools there are only three—the main institution at Calcutta established by the late, lamented Sister Nivedita, with two branches, one at Bally and the other at Comilla. These schools are specially suited to the requirements of Hindu



girls who are trained in the Hindu ideals of womanhood and who are taught Sanskrit and English with their vernacular. Many more such girls' schools have yet to be founded to remove the serious want of the Hindu community. Swami Vivekananda was keenly alive to this necessity, for he felt within his heart of hearts that true national progress would never be possible without the education of Hindu women on the right lines and so it is for this purpose that he specially employed Sister Nivedita. The real obstacle to the higher education of women in our country is the early marriage of our girls. Their higher education will be possible only in proportion to the degree to which their marriageable age will be raised. It is a happy sign no doubt that their marriageable age is steadily rising. That all women are destined for marriage is an idea also that is gradually disappearing and it is most gratifying to note that a few highly-educated nuns have dedicated themselves entirely to the cause of the women of India. While on the subject of the education of girls, I should be failing in my duty were I not to specially mention Sree Sarada Mandir, a noble institution where women-teachers are being trained.

The vision of a Hindu University like the famous ancient universities of Nalanda, Taxilla, Odantapuri and Vikramsila constantly floated before the eyes of Swami Vivekananda. It was his earnest desire to lay the foundation of such a university or failing that, a college after his own ideal. I had occasion to go to Kashmir and stay there for some time a few years ago. While there I was credibly informed that Swamiji had made a serious attempt to establish such a college at Srinagar. His Highness the Maharaja was quite willing to grant him land for the purpose but unfortunately through certain adverse circumstances I need not detail here the scheme fell through. Be that as it may, it is the duty of the country to see that such a college is soon established at a suitable place. It is very expensive no doubt but nothing is denied to a dogged pertinacity. Such a college would be the best vehicle for the propagation of the ideas of Vivekananda. It is a pity the Swami passed away in the very prime of life. Had he lived a few years more he could have done so many things that they are beyond the utmost stretch of our imagination. But no useful purpose is served by regretting and imagining. It is the



bounden duty of all his children to see that his unfinished work is pushed forward as far as possible.

(To be continued)

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF BENEDETTO CROCE.\*

By KALYAN CHANDRA GUPTA, M.A.

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Benedetto Croce stands in the forefront of modern Italian Philosophy. It is mainly owing to the interest which his doctrines created that Italian Philosophy has attracted the attention of thinkers outside Italy. He was born in 1866. Unlike most philosophers he has never held a professional appointment in any university. He has sufficient wealth and leisure to enable him to devote his life to literary and philosophical pursuits. Thus his philosophy is singularly free from narrow academic bias and has a freshness and novelty of its own.

Before studying the details of his philosophical system it is essentially necessary to understand what Croce means by Philosophy and what he takes to be its proper subject-matter.

Ordinary common-sense looks upon all objects as existing outside and independently of the persons who know them from time to time. That objects are known does not make any difference to them. All the qualities which we perceive in a thing belong to the thing itself and would remain unchanged even if nobody perceives them. It is true that the same thing may appear differently to different persons at the same time and also to the same person at different times. But this variability in the appearances of an object is thought to be quite consistent with its possessing a set of permanent qualities which do not change with the change of the percipient. Physical sciences,

\* Benedetto Croce enjoys a great reputation in the philosophical world of the West. The West is trying to build up a philosophy which will be all-comprehensive and include all facts of life and reality. Croce's philosophy is one of the many attempts towards its realisation, and though it militates against many of the Vedantic ideas it is interesting and instructive as partially expressive of the present philosophical struggles of the West.—Ed., P. B.



however, make a distinction between the essential and non-essential attributes of things. The former are those which are inherent in things and would be there even if nobody ever had any knowledge of them, while the latter are those which things seem to acquire when they come into contact with the sense-organs of percipient beings. The world, as it really is, must be, according to these physical sciences, a collection of innumerable particles of matter devoid of all sensible qualities. The world as it is experienced in sense perception is not the ultimate reality inasmuch as it is distorted to a large extent by the peculiarities of our organisms, our dispositions, wishes and expectations. To know the real nature of the world it is necessary to get at something whose character is quite independent of the experiences of particular individuals. This alone really and ultimately exists. Everything else is reducible to it and can be explained by it. The presence or absence of percipient subjects makes no difference to it. It is the task of physical sciences to study the nature of this reality quite apart from what particular individuals experience it to be.

Philosophy studies the nature of Reality as a whole. The different physical sciences also study Reality but there is a great difference between the methods adopted by them and Philosophy. Reality for us is what it is experienced as. We can deal with Reality only in so far as it forms part of our experience. What the different sciences do is that they leave out the experiencing subjects and attempt to depict Reality as it is in itself, that is, apart from minds and their activities. Philosophy, on the other hand, has to keep in view the study of Reality as a whole and cannot ignore the experiencing subjects without mutilating Reality itself. Philosophy has to start from the fact that Reality is experience and then proceed to give an account of it.

Philosophy is, therefore, according to Croce, concrete, whereas sciences are abstract. Philosophy makes the living experience as a whole its subject-matter. If we dismember this living experience into two separate halves, mind on the one side and matter on the other, and investigate into each of them independently of the other and then bring the results of such investigations together that would not give us Philosophy in the true sense. Sciences deal with abstractions. The objects with which they have to do are abstracted from the whole of



experience and therefore they cannot give us a knowledge of Reality in all its fullness. They may have great practical utility but their method of investigation is wholly inappropriate to a correct understanding of the ultimate nature of Reality as a whole.

Philosophy is, for Croce, synonymous with Philosophy of mind. This may seem at first quite strange to us who are accustomed to find so many different things in the universe besides mind. Croce, however, does not regard mind as an entity existing side by side with other entities which stand over against it but as comprehending all Reality. Reality is mind, what is not mind cannot have any reality. Ordinarily we consider the object of knowledge as something that acts on the mind from without and which the mind has simply to accept as a given fact. Croce denies the reality of the so-called brute fact which the mind passively receives from without. If we analyse a piece of concrete experience we shall find that if we abstract from it all forms which are supplied by the mind nothing is left. The study of Reality is the study of experience and therefore of mind.

Here we must guard ourselves against one misconception. We must not understand by the term "Philosophy of Mind" what is known as Psychology. Psychology as an empirical science studies the states and activities of mind and tries to find out the laws which govern them. But in such investigations we treat mind as one of the many objects which constitute the universe. The phenomena of mind are studied in abstraction from the universe as a whole. Empirical Psychology is thus on a par with other positive and exact sciences which investigate only different parts of Reality. Philosophy of Mind, again, is not equivalent to what is sometimes called Rational Psychology. Rational Psychology investigates into the nature, constitution and origin of the human soul as a substantial entity separate from the phenomena of mind. According to Croce such a soul-substance is a mere abstraction, a concept of the mind and therefore an investigation into its nature or origin cannot take the place of Philosophy. Philosophy of mind, therefore, is the investigation of the nature of all Reality, that is, Philosophy in the true sense of the term.

Mind is ever active, its essence is activity. Knowledge is not generated out of the impact of two heterogeneous sub-



stances, the soul-substance and the material substance. It is the mind's activity in which the mind creates its own object. Croce rejects that view of mind, which looks upon it as a static entity standing over against its acts or as a synthetic principle of unity which is changeless and timeless. Mind is self-creating and self-creative. It does not require any foreign substance as material for its experience. To study Reality is, therefore, to study the various activities of mind.

Philosophy, therefore, becomes equivalent to the study of the different fundamental activities of mind ; and as mind is co-extensive with Reality its activities are the different forms which Reality assumes. The task of Philosophy is to classify these forms of Reality or activities of mind, to determine their relationship to each other, to grade them in their proper order and to show what part each of them plays in the whole of Reality which they constitute. Philosophy is, therefore, essentially a science of order and arrangement.

It may be asked at this stage whether Croce means by mind, the mind of the finite individual and identifies the whole of Reality with it. Does every man create his own world out of himself alone? Croce's answer to this question would be that every individual consciousness is the embodiment of and is continuous with a universal consciousness. The subject of philosophical enquiry is not the consciousness of the individual in so far as he is a mere individual but the universal consciousness which is in every individual. Every individual's experience contains elements which he shares in common with other individuals. These are the universal forms of thought. Then again, if we examine the activity of a particular mind at a particular moment we shall find that it cannot be understood fully if we take only that moment into account. Every moment in the life of the individual mind carries within it an illimitable past that gives it its present character. It is generally our habit to look upon the past, the present and the future as composed of discrete spans of time coming in succession. In the living life-history of every individual the present, the past and the future merge into each other and form a continuous process. Every individual mind is thus continuous with that universal Mind whose activity is identical with universal history.

This universal Mind, however, should not be identified



with a static, timeless Absolute. It is a Life that is ever changing, that is eternally creating itself anew. The whole of Reality is to be regarded as free development or as History. Philosophy which is the interpretation of the activity of mind is itself a continuation of the same activity. Hence Philosophy is identical with History.

According to Croce, mind has two principal forms of activity, the theoretical activity and the practical activity. The theoretical activity is the activity of knowing. It is ordinarily supposed that in knowing or perceiving we are wholly passive. The external world stamps impressions on our minds and we cannot but know these impressions. But such a view of knowledge is altogether rejected by Croce. Even when the mind simply knows, it is active, because it creates its own object. Each of these forms of activity has two sub-forms.

The sub-forms of the theoretic activity are intuition and conceptual thinking. Our experience is composed of two factors—particular images and universal concepts. The images are the raw material of our knowledge whereas the concepts supply the form. Kant thought that the material of our knowledge comes from without in the form of sense impressions. According to Croce, however, the mind supplies both the material and the form of experience—the particular images and the universal concepts.

The formation of images is the first form of mental activity. This primary activity is imagination or intuition, it gives us the simplest kind of knowledge. We have to apprehend the images of particular things before we can have a knowledge of the world as a connected system. All the higher activities of our thought presuppose this kind of knowledge. At the same time, however, we have to bear in mind that there is a difference in kind between this primary activity and the activity of thought.

Croce calls the first form of mental activity the aesthetic activity and, in doing so connects his theory of art with his theory of Reality. The image-forming activity which every mind exercises is, according to him, essentially the activity of the artist. We may at first fail to apprehend any similarity between the act of perceiving an object and that of writing a poem, composing a song or painting a picture. When we perceive an object such as a chair or a table, it seems to be presented to



us from without, it does not seem to be created or in any way acted on by ourselves. It may, of course, look beautiful or ugly but beauty and ugliness also seem to be features existing in objects and affecting us. Artists on the other hand produce beautiful objects which bear the stamp of their creative genius. In order to understand what Croce means when he identifies the primary activity of imagination with the æsthetic activity we must bear in mind his views on the nature of knowledge and also of beauty. Even in sense perception, Croce holds, we are not confronted by a foreign 'something' which is thrust on our consciousness from without. The object of consciousness is a creation of the mind, it is mental. It appears to be external to the mind and to possess an independence of its own only when the mind imposes certain abstract concepts on its own creation. Beauty is also a thing of the mind. It does not reside either in the physical object which is apprehended in sense perception or in poems, pictures or statues considered as things outside the mind. When we perceive an object to be beautiful its beauty is our own creation. Every man is, therefore, an artist in virtue of the mere fact that he has the faculty of imagination. To find an object to be beautiful one must have an intuition of it. An object regarded merely as an element of the mechanism of nature is not an æsthetic fact but is the subject-matter of abstract sciences. Nothing is beautiful or ugly in the eyes of science. An object is beautiful only in so far as the mind grasps its individuality in intuition without the help of logical categories. When a man perceives ordinary objects of sense he has to exercise this simplest kind of activity which is essentially identical with the activity of artists.

Is there then no difference between ordinary men and great poets and artists? So far as the essential artistic activity is concerned there is no difference. The only difference is that ordinary men cannot give adequate expressions to their pure intuitions. Beauty is, according to Croce, nothing but expression. An intuition or image which is adequately expressed is beautiful. Ugliness is simply the want of expression. By 'expression' in this connection Croce does not mean only such external forms of expression as language or pictures and statues. Any manifestation of the intuition is its expression and the expression may be wholly mental. The



æsthetic quality of an intuition depends upon its vigour, distinctness and vividness. It is, however, a mistake to think that we can have the intuitions of a great poet or artist but may not possess their powers of expression. The excellence of an intuition and the adequacy of its expression go together.

The second sub-form of the theoretical activity is the logical activity. Just as the æsthetic activity creates the images of particular things so the logical activity supplies the universal concepts without which our experience cannot become systematic. Conception presupposes imagination or intuition and thus belongs to the second grade of mental activity. Just as *Æsthetics* is the science of the pure intuition so *Logic* is the science of the pure concept. Croce distinguishes between the pure or true concept and what he calls the pseudo-concept. All the things belonging to a particular group may be called by a common name and that name is often called a concept. Examples of such class names are 'House,' 'Dog' etc. Such class-names are not true universals of thought, they merely indicate the individuals that compose the group. True concepts on the other hand must be really universal. No number of individuals can exhaust the import of a true concept. It transcends any and every single presentation that we are aware of. At the same time, however, there can be no part of reality from which the concept is absent. 'Beauty,' 'Quality,' 'Development' are pure concepts.

A pure concept has three characteristics, it is expressive, it is universal and it is concrete. It is the expression of thought. We cannot think without concepts just as we cannot perceive without images. The universality of a concept implies that it cannot be exhausted by any number of particular individuals. It is concrete inasmuch as it is immanent in every presentation.

The pseudo-concepts have no importance from the philosophical point of view. Abstract sciences cannot, however, do without these pseudo-concepts. They are convenient fictions with which we label different groups of things for our practical convenience.

Logic understood as the science of pure concepts is something quite different from the traditional or formal Logic. In his *Logic* Croce does not give us rules for the guidance of our reasoning but discusses the most universal characteristics of



Reality. His Logic as he himself points out is thus a study of Reality and is identical with Metaphysics.

We now come to the second form of mental activity, viz., the practical activity. Man not only knows but also acts. This practical activity presupposes the theoretical activity and has two sub-forms, the economic activity and the ethical activity. Corresponding to these activities, again, there are the philosophical sciences of Economics and Ethics.

Just as an intuition and its expression cannot be separated, so also we cannot separate a volition and the outward action in which it issues. It is a mistake to think of volition as something purely internal and action as solely consisting of external physical movements. Just as there are no unexpressed intuitions so also there are no volitions which are not manifested as actions. Volition and action are two aspects of one concrete event.

Volition has two forms. The first form is based on the concepts of utility, the second on that of goodness. In the first form the object aimed at is something which is useful and in which only a particular individual or individuals are interested. The second form of activity is directed towards something universal, that is, the common good. The first is the economic activity and the second the ethical activity. The second presupposes the first form of activity. Though these two forms of conduct can be distinguished, yet they are not essentially opposed or mutually exclusive. Every act is at the same time useful as well as good. No act is a purely economic, self-regarding, individual act, on the other hand no act is a purely ethical, other-regarding, universal act. Every action embodies both the forms of utility and goodness.

So we get altogether four forms of the activity of mind or spirit and four philosophical sciences corresponding to them. These forms constitute a series in which each preceding form of activity is the prior condition of the succeeding one. Philosophy as the study of Reality or Experience as a whole comprehends all these sciences.

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## A BIOGRAPHICAL FICTION?

### THE FACE OF SILENCE

by Dhan Gopal Mukerji. Published by E. P. Dutton & Co.,  
681 Fifth Avenue, New York, U. S. A.

Some five years back Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerji came to spend a few days in the Ramakrishna Math at Belur, Calcutta. That was, as he says in his book, his "first experience of the followers of Sree Rama Krishna." He had been living for the last twelve years in America, and he evidently found much in the life of the Monastery to learn and question about. "And when I questioned them as to what had freed them from both pleasure and pain, they invariably pointed at the life and sayings of Shree Rama Krishna.....When all monks on each occasion pointed at the life of Rama Krishna I had to go and study it. 'It is better to examine the source of the fountain,' I was told. But I did not go to a printed page.....In order to study the life of Rama Krishna I began to look for its chroniclers and not the chronicle." (p. 7).

The result of that search is *The Face of Silence*. It has been beautifully planned. It is divided into sixteen chapters. Some of them purport to give the life-story of Sri Ramakrishna and descriptions of his intercourse with orthodox and reformed Hindus. Other chapters contain stories—as Mr. Mukerji knows them—of his disciples, "Vivekananda, Premananda and Lattu Maharaj," those of the living ones being left out through courtesy, and a conversation in which Sri Ramakrishna is represented as expounding the mysteries of spiritual experience, "describing the indescribable." We have also chapters on disciples expounding the life and teachings of their Master, and on Sri Ramakrishna's relations with a "wayward soul." There are also long descriptions of the life and doings of his monastic followers, and of the author's talks with the "Pundit" who is none other than "M," the author of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. The plan of the book, it must be conceded, is nicely conceived and comprehensive. For to understand Sri Ramakrishna we must study not only his own earthly career and doings and utterances but also those of his disciples, as well as the movement that has originated from him. We have thus a plan of presentation before us which is highly commendable. And who can deny that such a book was really needed for the Western readers?

But alas for the execution of the plan! Never were we so sorely disappointed as in this book. It has been like looking on a fair face distraught with insanity. Mr. Mukerji wields a facile pen. He knows the art of book-writing. We have been long expecting this work, for we heard of his being engaged in its preparation. We knew he had indented authentic books on Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples and



their teachings, and we hoped that his book would be a welcome addition to the Ramakrishna literature. But such as it is, we wish it had never been published.

For it lacks the prime quality that a biography and an interpretation should possess, the quality of truth. The book is a strange medley of facts and unjustifiable fancies. And no greater harm comes of a book than when it is full of misrepresentations and when those statements are accepted by many as the very truth. It is impossible to dwell here on all the false things that have been accommodated within the range of 255 pages. They amount to no fewer than 260 (and in fact more) misstatements. A few samples will suffice :

"The stark clarity of the symbolism of Kali, that nothing abides but Renunciation, made Rama Krishna see through the pageantry of rituals and rites. How could he see the meaning of Her Presence and yet remain a prince of the church? Though not yet out of his teens he undertook her message and set out to shape his sacerdotal duties accordingly. First of all he gave up his silken vestments and gold-embroidered silver chudders. He refused to eat from plates of gold, waited on by a dozen servants. Last of all he moved from his sumptuously furnished residence into the little room near the servants' quarters where he lived for the rest of his life. Having done that he set out to simplify some of the most ornamental services of the temple. No more did he put on himself the ceremonial garlands of pearls, dhoti, the vestment of scarlet silk, the chudder of gossamer blue shot with bits of diamonds like stars. He refused to wave censers of gold before his deity and gave up reading to the people from a book held between gold-embossed covers. As he whittled down the intricate pictorial rituals he concentrated more and more on learning and teaching his congregation the inner meaning of their worship." (pp. 23-24).

Is that Sri Ramakrishna?

"He constantly meditated on the following sentence from the scriptures : Gold is clay ; clay is gold ! Sometimes to prove it in conduct, he gave away the gold and silver offerings that were brought to him by rich pilgrims. Thus he prayed and practised for nearly a year, yet reached no solution of the problem of money. He prayed and meditated for hours every day. As he says himself, 'I was most deeply perplexed by the problem of money. Our religion teaches that gold and dust are one. Since I took my religion seriously, month after month every morning, I held a coin and a little clay together in my hand and meditated, 'Gold is clay and clay is gold,' yet that produced no spiritual experience in me. Nothing proved the truth of that statement. I do not remember after how many months' meditation, one day I was sitting on the river bank very early in the morning. I prayed to the Mother to give me light. Lo! suddenly I beheld the whole world in the radiant vesture of gold. Then it changed into a deeper lustre—the color of brown clay more beautiful than gold. With that vision deep down in my soul I heard like the trumpeting of ten



thousand elephants: 'Clay and gold are One to Thee.' Now that my prayers were answered I flung both gold and clay into the Ganges." (pp. 27-28).

Preposterously ingenious!

Here is the author's description of the early life of Lattu Maharaj—Swami Adbhutananda. He is described as "an untutored young servant of a merchant prince from the West country."

"So the next day the merchant and his servants set out for Dakshineswar. Behind him followed his servants.....seated in three other white boats, one of which contained Lattu who held a plate of solid gold covered with gems. This was the offering to be made to the Holy One.....So they ventured to enter, the merchant first and Lattu following with the offering plate of gold.....The merchant bowed and made some appropriate remarks. Then Lattu walked forward and put the offering at the Master's feet. The precious stone gleamed at him.....As soon as the day's ceremony was over, he and his master went away to sell the gems and the gold plate in order to give their proceeds to the poor." (pp. 141-143).

We wish we had space enough at our disposal to give the facts regarding the incidents referred to in the extracts. They will be found in *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, published by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, and compiled from authentic sources. A comparison of the author's version with the correct one will be a staggering revelation. Even the short sketch of Sri Ramakrishna's life as given by him, is more fanciful than real. In the chapter, "Orthodox Hindus and Rama Krishna," we are given a conversation of the Master with Ishan Mukherji, a householder. The actual conversation of which a record was preserved by a disciple is truly inspiring, being full of the fire of devotion and renunciation. A translation of it was published in the August number of *Prabuddha Bharata* of the year 1924. But what have we in Mr. Mukerji's book? A sad caricature of it: only a few sentences are taken from the original record, the rest of it, words and ideas, is purely his own creation. In another chapter, "Description of the Indescribable," we find the same method followed, the description has little correspondence to truth. The subject discussed herein is very abstruse, the soul's journey from the conscious to the Super-conscious Transcendental. Any one having the least sense of responsibility would have hesitated to be flippant about it. But our author's fancy is uncontrollable, and we have consequently an exposition which has little to do with either Sri Ramakrishna's words or any authoritative scripture on the subject. Then there is another chapter, "A Recent Initiation," which deals with the method and process of initiation of the new recruits to the Ramakrishna Monastery. It will be granted, we hope, that we know something of the matter. But alas, in the author's description we do not recognise our experience.

It may be reasonably asked, why, if the author was in possession of the correct details, he has indulged in these vagaries of fancy. The author himself has furnished the reason. We read in the second



chapter that he went to pay a visit to the "Pundit" who is a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. The "Pundit" asks him: "What do you wish to learn of Rama Krishna?.....Do you seek the Rama Krishna history or the Rama Krishna legend?" The author answers: "I seek just enough facts to enable me to gather all the trustworthy legends together."

"'Good!' shouted my host with joy.....'Rama Krishna legends have not been gathered together. They contain more of the truth about him than all the authentic facts that I have written down. Legend is the chalice of truth. Facts are so veracious and so dull that nobody is uplifted by believing in them.' 'But history is most necessary and most trustworthy,' I exclaimed. 'Yes, it is necessary. Because on and around history will grow legend. As raw material for legend there is nothing finer than history. That is why I have written the Rama Krishna Chronicle. Five hundred years from now my work will find its fulfilment when a great poet will use it to create the Rama Krishna legend as deathless as my Master himself.' 'Are there many Rama Krishna legends extant now?' I asked. He shook his head and said 'Yes, some. Go to Dakshineswar and all the surrounding villages. Call on their oldest inhabitants; then ask them questions, etc.'"

We read in the last chapter again of the author's meeting with the "Pundit" in which the latter asks him, "Are the Rama Krishna legends that you have gathered tall enough? The legends ought to measure up to His sky-humbling stature."

"I said 'No, they are not tall. They seem to me quite natural and normal. They are mostly based on reality.' 'I do not mean that,' he rejoined,.....'I mean whatever legend grows up about him will become true.' 'I do not understand you.' I was puzzled. 'It is simple enough,' the Pundit ejaculated. 'Look at Christ: even His birth without any earthly father became a reality. Why? Because His Being was so living and so tall that in order to explain Him they had to invent Immaculate Conception. The same was the case with Buddha.....The same thing is happening to Rama Krishna. He was so spiritual that in order to explain him, people have to resort to many supernatural explanations.'"

This is the reason why facts have been discarded in favour of "legends." Facts are too dull! And this is the philosophy, ascribed to the "Pundit," which induced the author in collecting legends about Sri Ramakrishna and his Order. We are not quite sure whether the "Pundit" actually propounded this strange theory. He is not unknown to us, and we have never heard him dwelling on it. Of course if one takes it into one's head to write about the legends, and not the facts, of a great modern prophet and a living and a growing religious movement, one cannot be checked. But even in presenting legends, there must be truth, these must be *actually current* legends and not fancied ones. But we are sorry to remark that Mr. Mukerji is not up to even this second-rate truth. He has simply created stories about Sri



Ramakrishna and his disciples. We repeat that many of the strange, fanciful things that he has put in his book had their origin nowhere else than in his own brain. He says that the legends he collected were mostly based on reality. From whom did he collect them? Will he name them?

As regards the fantastic idea that truth is dull and nobody is uplifted by believing in them, if that is the moral the author has derived from the study of Sri Ramakrishna's life, we can only say that that is not the fault of truth, but of the vision that is too blind to perceive the sublime beauty of that transcendent life. Strange that where millions find the solace of life and the realisation of their highest dreams, our author finds little to inspire him unless he is stilted up by fancy! But perhaps he wanted through his fancies and distortions to draw out the hidden beauty and significance of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and his Order. But did not Mr. Mukerji feel in his inmost heart that to touch them in the way he has done was an unpardonable sacrilege?

We shall be excused, we hope, if we state that the author has done a great injustice to his readers by not telling them clearly the true nature of his book. The average reader will not know that he was reading merely a prose-poem, a biographical fiction. And herein lies the greatest mischief of the book. Perhaps Mr. Mukerji did not all wish that the illusion should be broken. Or why did he not add a few lines by way of preface telling the readers that he was not writing the history and truth of Sri Ramakrishna and his Order, but only his own fancies based on the skeleton of a few facts? Did he not owe this courtesy to the public and to the Order for which he professes so much regard? Surely he, so experienced in the affairs of the world, knew that unless duly warned, his readers would not understand the strange theory of legend that underlies his narrative.

That our fear is not unjustified is evident from the way in which the publishers of the book announce it. We are told that it "is Mukerji's enthralling story of his visit to the Monastery and of the gathering of the legends concerning Rama Krishna's early life, etc." and again that "this is the sublime record of religion in practise of a holy man, Rama Krishna, living only a generation ago." (Italics ours.) The publishers have forgot to make a distinction between *legends* and *record*. We recently came across an American review of the book, in course of which the reviewer says, "This new book by Mr. Mukerji gives us a summary of the life, legends and teachings of the modern Indian saint etc." So to this reviewer, the life and the teachings as given therein were true to facts. Could there be anything more insidious?

The least that is expected of a chronicler of a great life and movement is fidelity to truth and sympathetic understanding. It is in fact almost impossible for a man who does not merge himself in the truth of that life and movement to truly depict it. Unfortunately Mr. Mukerji had no patience or time to go deep into the truth of the



life and movement which form his subject. And it is no wonder that his performance has been so imperfect and unhappy.

## ESSENTIALS OF VEDANTISM.

### [THE VEDANTASARA]

#### INTRODUCTION

The *Vedāntasāra*, as the name implies, is the essence of the Vedānta Philosophy and is one of the authoritative books on the subject. On account of the succinct and lucid statement of the subject-matter it is regarded as one of the best books of its kind. The ordinary readers of the Vedānta generally expose themselves to confusion while studying the Upanishads and the Vedānta Sūtras with their commentaries on account of intricacies of arguments and apparently contradictory statements. For such readers the *Vedāntasāra* is an excellent book to begin with.

The reputed author of the book is Sri Sadananda Yogindra Saraswati who flourished in the fifteenth century, about 750 years after Sankara. He has embodied in his book all the theories of the Vedānta that have been developed since the time of Sankara by such famous scholars as Padmapada, Sureshwara, Hastamalaka, Sarvajnatmanuni, Vachaspati Mishra, Sri Harsha, Chitsukha, Vidyaranya and others. Madhusudan Saraswati, Brahmananda Saraswati, Appaya Dikshita, and a few more noted Advaita Philosophers have been left out on account of their subtle logic which baffles ordinary understanding. Many scholiasts have written commentaries on the *Vedāntasāra*. Three commentaries known as *Subodhini*, *Bālābodhini* and *Vidwanmanoranjini*, ascribed to Sri Nrisinha Saraswati, Apodeva and Sri Ramatirtha respectively are generally in use.

The *Vedāntasara* is not only a useful *vade-mecum* for the study of the Vedānta Philosophy, but it also gives the aspirant practical suggestions for the realisation of the *summum bonum* of life. Beginning with the qualifications of the pupils who would take up the study of the Vedānta, the book has dealt with various aspects of the philosophy such as the theory of creation, the theory of God, the five sheaths, the three bodies, the Supreme Self, the duty of the aspirants till his realisation of the Brahman and lastly the description of the liberated souls



in the blessed state of Samadhi. Our apology for publishing the translation of the text with notes on technical terms in the light of the three commentaries mentioned above is that it may be useful to those readers who are eager to learn of the great philosophical realisations of the ancient Indian sages but cannot read the original books on account of their deficiency in Sanskrit and want of time, and also that it may help them in forming a systematic and comprehensive idea of the various conclusions of the Vedanta Philosophy.

**अखण्डं सच्चिदानन्दमवाङ्मनसो गोचरम् ।**

**आत्मानमखिलाधारमाश्रयेऽभीष्टसिद्धये ॥ १ ॥**

1. I take refuge in the Self,<sup>1</sup> the Indivisible, the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, beyond<sup>2</sup> the reach of words and thought and the Substratum<sup>3</sup> of all, for the attainment of my cherished<sup>4</sup> desire.

[1 *Self*—It means here the Highest Self or the Paramatman. The word Atman is also used to denote the individual self or Jiva which in essence is identical with Brahman.

2 *Beyond etc.*—Comp. a similar passage in the Taittiriya Upanishad II, iv, 1. "Whence the words come back with the mind without realising the 'Truth'."

3 *Substratum etc.*—The Pure Brahman without attribute is the First Cause from which the universe has evolved, when looked at from the standpoint of creation. Therefore Atman is described here as the 'substratum of all.' Comp. "यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते"—"From which have been produced all these created beings."

4 *Cherished desire*—The summum bonum, or it may mean the fulfilment of the particular desire of the author, viz., the right expounding of the subject according to the scriptures.]

**अर्थतोऽप्यद्वयानन्दानतीतद्वैतमानतः ।**

**गुरुनाराय्य वेदान्तसारं वक्ष्ये यथामति ॥ २ ॥**

2. Having worshipped<sup>1</sup> the Guru who on account of his being free from the illusion of duality justifies<sup>2</sup> the meaning of his name Advavananda, I undertake the task of expounding the essence of the Vedanta according to my light.

[1 *Worshipped*—The scriptures enjoin salutation to the Guru before undertaking a work.

2 *Justifies etc.*—The name of the spiritual guide of the author is Advavananda which literally means the embodiment of unity and bliss. The Guru fully justified the name on account of his highest realisation. The word also signifies Brahman. Thus by this couplet the author salutes both Brahman and his Guru.]



वेदान्तो नाम ?—उपनिषत्प्रमाणं तदुपकारीणि शारीरकसूत्रादीनि च । ३

3. What is Vedānta?<sup>1</sup> It is the evidence<sup>2</sup> furnished by the Upanishads, as well as the Shariraka Sūtras<sup>3</sup> and others<sup>4</sup> that help in the correct expounding of its meaning.

[1 *Vedānta*—It literally means the concluding portion of the Vedas. The real meaning is the best or the Knowledge portion of the Vedas.

2 *Evidence*—The Sanskrit word *Pramāna* literally means the instrument of *Pramā* or Knowledge. The Vedānta Philosophy acknowledges the following six classes of evidence : (a) *Pratyaksha* (Direct perception), (b) *Anumāna* (Inference), (c) *Upamāna* (Comparison), (d) *Shabda* (Scriptural affirmation), (e) *Arthāpatti* (Presumption), (f) *Anupalabdhi* (Privation). The evidence furnished by the Upanishads falls under the *Shabda Pramāna*.

3 *Shariraka Sūtras*—The words mean the body of Badarayana Sūtras as interpreted by Sankara, which forms the basis of the Advaita school of philosophy. Literally the words signify the body of aphorisms which rightly determine the nature of the 'embodied creature.'

4 *And others*—The commentaries on the Upanishads and the Gita etc.]

अस्य वेदान्तप्रकरणत्वात् तदीयैः एव अनुबन्धैः तद्वत्तासिद्धेः न ते पृथक् आलोचनीयाः । ४

4. On account of its<sup>1</sup> being recognised as a *Prakarana*<sup>2</sup> treatise of the Vedānta, the *Anubandhas*<sup>3</sup> (moving considerations) of the latter just serve its purpose. Therefore they need not be discussed separately.

[1 *Its*—Of the *Vedāntasara*.

2 *Prakarana* etc.—The book which forms a part of a scripture and thus serves a special purpose of it.

3 *Anubandha*—Every Hindu scripture at the very outset deals with four questions, viz., (1) *Adhikāri*—the qualifications that make the student competent to enter upon its study, (2) *Vishaya* or the subject-matter, (3) *Sambandha* or the connection between the subject-matter and the book itself, (4) *Prayojana* or the inducement or motive for entering upon the study at all. The answer to each of these questions is called an *Anubandha*.]

तत्र अनुबन्धो नाम अधिकारि-विषय-सम्बन्ध-प्रयोजनानि । ५

5. The moving considerations of the Vedānta are the determination of the competency of the student, the subject-matter, its connection with the book and the inducements to its study.

(To be continued)



## ANGULIMALA

By SWAMI ATULANANDA

Now it happened when the Blessed One, Lord Buddha, walked on earth, bringing Light to those who lived in darkness, that there was born in the household of the brahmin priest to the king of Kosala one who would become a cause of terror to every wayfarer in the land. His birth took place during the middle watch of a night filled with evil portents. The wind now howled, now moaned, the clouds poured down torrents of rain, lightning rent the skies, and thunder crashed, shaking the city to its very foundations. And in the jungle the jackals wailed like lost souls. And wonder of wonders, defying the racing clouds and the darkness of that terrible night, one single constellation shone ominously in the pitch-dark sky. It was the most feared of all constellations, the Constellation of the Robbers. And that night, the night of Angulimala's birth, all the armour in the town shone with a mysterious crimson light.

Awakened by the tumult of the night, and seeing his armour glow like fire, the king in his palace trembled with fear. The State astrologers were summoned. What did it presage? With beating heart the king awaited their verdict. Then the eldest among the astrologers spoke: "O King! Fear not, for though this night has given birth to one who will become a fearful robber, he will not attempt to usurp the throne. And his reign of terror will be of short duration." Thus pacified the king rested in peace.

Now, after many calculations and searchings of holy script it was brought to light that the future robber was no other but the new-born son of the king's priest. But his mind having been put to rest the king sent word to the distracted father that the child would be allowed to live.

The boy Angulimala was born with marvellous strength, and as he grew up his strength equalled that of a young elephant. He was sent to study under the first teacher of Takasila, where, with other brahmin boys, he was kept under close surveillance. Proud, arrogant and mischievous he, however, bullied his fellow-students beyond all endurance and none dared oppose him, for his temper was irascible, and on



the slightest provocation his muscular arms would crush the offender. It was then a happy day for the other students, when at last the teacher addressing Angulimala, said, "My boy, you have now completed your studies, go and live in peace. May your strength and courage be your friends, may these not act as your enemies." But such good counsel was altogether wasted on the turbulantly minded youth.

Released from the restraint of the student life, and scorning the entreaties of his parents, Angulimala gave now free reign to his pent up ruthlessness. Providing himself with knives and bludgeons and swords he entered the Jalini forest in Kosala. There from a cliff near the highway he watched the passers-by, and rushing down killed them and robbed them of all they possessed. Nay, in his arrogance he cut off the thumbs of his murdered victims, and making a garland of the finger-bones hung it round his neck. It was his avowed boast that this garland should not be complete till it contained one thousand thumbs. When this became known the people called him Angulimala (Finger-wreathed). But his real name was Himsaka.

Now it came to such a pass that no traveller was safe on the road by day or by night. The highway became deserted as the people kept close to their homes fearing to meet the cruel robber. Then the king to protect his subjects proclaimed: "Let a strong force go out and capture the bandit."

Angulimala's mother hearing the proclamation and fearing for the life of her son, said to her husband, "Our son is in great danger, send for him, and bid him stop doing harm to the people." But the husband replied, "I have nought to do with such a son; let the king do as he will." Then she, her heart filled with pity, set out alone to bring her son and save him from harm.

Now it happened that the Exalted One, the Buddha, he who knew all things inward and outward, was residing on the outskirts of a village some leagues from the Jalini Wood. And the Compassionate One seated in contemplation beneath a banyan tree, in a vision had revealed to him all things concerning Angulimala, his past, his present and his future. Then he thought, "This day if Angulimala meets his mother he will do her great injury, for his heart is cruel, and to complete his finger-wreath only one more thumb is wanting. Surely the ruthless youth will cut off her thumb to make good his boast.



This, however, is his last birth. If I do not go to him there might be great loss. I will speak to him." So after he had gone the rounds of alms and finished his morning meal the Buddha set out alone for the Jalini Wood.

Now when Angulimala saw his mother approach he was reckoning on her finger to make up his number. But suddenly the Exalted One stood between them. Then thought the son, "Why should I kill my mother? Let me rather go for that ascetic's thumb." And drawing his sword he went for the Blessed One. But the Buddha had already directed his steps toward the jungle.

Then Angulimala followed the Blessed One, stalking him as a lion might stalk a deer. Hidden by brush and trees he made his way, till with a great leap he stood behind the Buddha. And raising his sword he brought it down with great force, intending to split the Buddha's head. But the sword, without touching the Exalted One, deflected to the right and embedded itself into the earth. Extracting his sword, Angulimala ran up to the retreating Buddha, once more intending to split open his head. But this time the sword deflected to the left and embedded itself into the earth. At this the robber stood dumbfounded. "Does my trusty sword refuse me service?" he thought. Then taking up his sword again, he found it so heavy that he could scarcely lift it. The Buddha in the mean time walked on majestically looking neither to the right nor to the left, nor even once turning his head.

Angulimala thought, "Who is this wretched monk? He is exerting his magic power," and leaving behind his now unwieldy sword he ran after him purposing to kill the ascetic with one blow of his iron fist. But though he ran and panted, and the sweat began to pour from his body, he could not overtake the monk who walked on at his usual pace. Then, suddenly, Angulimala could run no more. He was unable to lift his feet. Standing as if nailed to the ground, in wild anger, he cried, "Stop, ascetic! Stop!"

Then the Buddha neither turning nor changing his pace, said, "Though I walk, yet have I stopped, and do you, Angulimala, also stop!"

"Passing strange!" the robber thought, "This man has thrown a spell over me. These Sakiyan ascetics are held to speak the truth, yet he says he has stopped while he is walk-



ing, and he tells me to stop who am standing still. What can he mean?" So he called: "Thou who art walking, friar, dost say: 'I have stopped!' and me, who have stopped, thou tellest to stop! I ask thee, what is the meaning of thy words? How sayest thou that thou hast stopped, but I have not?"

To this the Buddha replied: "Yea, I have stopped, renouncing violence towards all living beings. Thou holdest not thy hand against thy fellow-men. It is therefore, I have stopped, but thou still goest on." Then turning round the Buddha with a friendly gesture motioned to Angulimala to approach. That instant the robber's feet were free to move, and he approached the Exalted One.

Then the Buddha taking Angulimala by the hand made him sit beside him under a tree, and began to teach him The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness. He revealed to Angulimala that no arbitrary heavenly power, but our own hearts alone with our thoughts and deeds cause us to be born, at one time on earth, at another in heaven, and then again in hell. He spoke of the misery of this round of rebirth caused by ignorance, and of the bliss of Nirvana, the incomparable peaceful state, free from corruption, and attainable through right understanding.

Angulimala listened attentively, his head bent in shame and remorse. And the Enlightened One continued: "That for which wise men spend many lives of renunciation and contemplation, has become your happy lot, Angulimala. Only few created beings attain to humanity in comparison with the far more numerous creatures who in lower kingdoms come into existence. So also but few men are on the earth at the same time as a Buddha, in comparison with the far greater number in whose time no Buddha lives on the earth. And again, but few individuals among these men are so fortunate as to see the Blessed One, in comparison with the far greater number who do not see him. But thou, Angulimala, hast been born as a man, and that at a time when a Perfect Buddha has appeared on earth, and thou hast seen him, and art with him, even with the Enlightened One."

Then Angulimala had clear vision. Suddenly the veil of ignorance was removed, his insight reached maturity, rapture pervaded his being, and he knew that he sat beside the Compassionate One, Gotama, the Buddha. In exaltation he ex-



claimed, "Great is the lion's roar! 'To help me the Exalted One is come hither! Hail, thou noblest of beings! Thou hast had pity on the worst! I pray thee, wilt thou suffer me to abide with thee?"

Placing his right hand on Angulimala's head, the Buddha consented and he spoke: "Even as there are among the few who see the Buddha but few who hear his doctrine, so among those who hear the doctrine there are but few who comprehend it. Thou, Angulimala, wilt hear the doctrine and wilt comprehend it. Come, Bhikkhu, be my disciple and follow me!"

Then Angulimala collecting his swords and knives and bludgeons threw them down a cliff, and followed the Master, and following he composed these stanzas:\*

The conduit-makers lead the stream,  
Fletchers coerce the arrow shaft,  
The joiners mould the wooden plank,  
The self 'tis that the pious tame.  
Some creatures are subdued by force,  
Some by the hook, and some by whips;  
But I by such an One was tamed  
Who needed neither staff nor sword.

Once an obnoxious bandit I,  
Known by my name of Finger-wreathed,  
Till toiling mid the awful flood,  
I refuge in the Buddha found.  
Once were my hands imbrued with blood;  
Known was my name as Finger-wreathed.  
O see the Refuge I have found,  
With every craving rooted out!

He who in former days a wastrel living,  
In later day no more so spends his time,  
He goeth o'er the world a radiance shedding,  
As when the moon comes free in clouded sky.  
To whomso'er the ill deeds he hath wrought,  
By a good life are closed up and sealed,  
He goeth o'er the world a radiance shedding  
As when the moon comes free in clouded sky.

\* The stanzas are from "Psalms of the Brethren," by Mrs. Rhys Davids.



The Master hath my fealty and love,  
 And all the Buddha's ordinance is done.  
 Low have I laid the heavy load I bore :  
 Cause for rebirth is found in me no more.

Angulimala became known as Ahimsaka (the Harmless), for in sweetness and gentility of temper he surpassed all other monks. Many years he abode with the Master serving him in great humility and when the Blessed One was no more in this world he retired to woodland solitude. There he dwelt in the bliss of emancipation, and there, at last, he entered into Final Peace.

"When in the lowering sky thunders the storm-cloud's drum,  
 And all the pathways of the birds are thick with rain,  
 The brother sits within the hollow of the hills,  
 Rapt in an ecstasy of thought :—no higher bliss  
     Is given to men than this.  
 Or when by rivers on whose banks together crowd  
 Garlands of woodland blossoms bright with many a hue,  
 With heart serene the brother sits upon the strand,  
 Rapt in an ecstasy of thought :—no higher bliss  
     Is given to men than this."

## HINDU PEACE AND CHRISTIAN POWER.

By JANE ALDEN

Hinduism—Christianity: the greatness of the eastern, as contrasted with the western religious ideal! How is one to express one's small, personal feeling about a subject as vast as that? There is a story that can help to express it for me.

On Christmas Eve, at the mission home in Calcutta where I was staying, there appeared a brown-faced up-countryman, with a note. It was from the headman of an obscure village, some twenty miles off from the railroad; and this is what it said: "We have heard that to-morrow is a great festival for a god of our foreign friends. We do not know which god this is or why you worship him at this particular season; but we beg that you will honour us and our humble village by coming here to our temple and allowing us to worship your god with you at this time."

I heard this brotherly invitation, thinking: "Who but Hindus could have written it? What Christian sect or denomination the world



round would have shown such amazing tolerance or religious breadth of sympathy?" And I turned from hearing it, to behold in the doorway, the beaming face of the native Christian pastor. Like the great majority of the five million Christians in India, this man, one of the finest and best-looking people I ever saw, had been a pariah, an Outcaste, condemned by the inflexible Hindu social law to remain forever outside of self-respect and an equal chance with his fellow men. The Christian missionary came. And to him and these millions like him, as if from God in Heaven, was given the teaching that, in the eye of the Christian Ruler and Father, they were rated as no less precious than any twice-born Brahmin.\*

"Madame, will you come and see the children in the Sunday-school? They are delighted with the tree and the little presents. Soon the fathers and mothers will be coming, and we shall have rice and sweetmeats, for the whole Christian family, in the courtyard."

I went with him—radiant, energetic, shepherding his equally radiant flock of happy, well-dressed people—first to the simple service in the Sunday-school room and then to the holiday feast, beloved by Indians, in the mission courtyard. In my mind I saw the people of those pariah villages I had visited—the rags, the misery, the abasement; the thousands of dull, hopeless faces one met in the streets every-day. And then I looked around me at the clean, clear-eyed, confident and truly "redeemed" company of "the Christian family."

What had Hinduism done for these?

So there, in those two prevailing incidents of my Indian Christmas Eve, I found my answer to the question: Which is superior, the Hindu or the Christian system? And the answer is: Neither, but each complementary to, fulfilling and rounding out, the other. Christian civilization can do for mankind what the Hindu has not done, and vice versa. But few Christians will admit the vice versa!

My own journey to India had been undertaken because of disillusion with the current religious offerings of the West and simultaneous attraction to the spiritual strength and security perceived in Hindu philosophy. But fate postponed the teaching I had actually come for, meanwhile placing me in various situations where I should be made to see the whole, instead of just Hinduism, and to realize some greatnesses in my own Christian West that I had not appreciated before.

Thus I welcomed, rather than revolted against, the same wise fate that set me down first, not in the Hindu monastery that was my goal, but in a Christian missionary home. The monks could not receive me at their guest house until another woman student should come to live with me. An English lady wanting to study with them was expected about the first of January. In the meantime, since all Calcutta hotels were overflowing in the Christmas season, I set myself to see life from the angle of the missionaries.

\* But not so, we regret to note, in the eyes of the Christian Church: witness the separate churches for the blacks and the whites.—*Editor, P. R.*



Everyone who comes back from the Orient is asked, "Do you approve of foreign missionaries?" One might as well be asked, "Do you approve of people?" Missionaries are just like everybody else—good, bad, indifferent; little and big, petty and great; greedy, generous, cowardly, heroic. Everett Dean Martin rightly says: "Little men do not become great men when they become religious; nor do superior people become common-place." We all know the sacrifices made by the courageous regiment of missionary expatriates: the gallant pioneering; the obscure day-to-day drudgery in far distant places; the fevers, dangers and thousand and one petty difficulties and privations; hardest of all perhaps, the long years of separation from their children, sent back to school and college. Yet never a word of complaint! Who am I, who is any of us, to launch wholesale invective against such men and women on the say so of some disaffected tourist or disgruntled consul?

And yet—and yet! Never have I heard such hostile criticism as I heard from missionaries. I came down to my first breakfast at the mission home, to catch it—on the very echo of the "Amen" at morning prayers. Rabindranath Tagore, Annie Besant, Vivekananda—these and other noble names were on the list of the censured. At every meal I heard some other than Christian teacher, or, some other than Christian cause, held before that uncompromising tribunal and summarily despatched with a few caustic sentences. My own Indian friends who came to the mission were not exempt. I was asked whether or not they were "heathen" or supported Theosophy or the non-Christian movements. And had it been known that I contemplated staying at a Hindu monastery—I!

What stood out very clearly in all this critical comment was that either the denounced had got members or they had got money in either case their organization had got power and prestige away from the Christian organization. But was it a powerful organization that Christ came to preach?

There is this passion for the power of the organization, but for themselves—missionaries and Christian workers—the most selfless effacement and devotion. No hour is too early or too late for them to be tirelessly about their various labours. No sacrifice is beyond them. For "the work" they will lay down their lives and frequently do. After those conversations, I would leave the table, boiling, and go with Miss Moulton to her school, Dr. Jessup to his hospital, Miss Shearer to her rescue home or Dr. Gills to his pariah boys' agricultural training camp—and be lost in respectful admiration. Where power really is, it never has to make claims for itself. And the power of the Christian Church and of most Christians, is in action: the practical carrying out, into all fields and departments of life, of the supremely Christian ideal of service to one's neighbour. The ideal is a great one. It would be greater still if it included recognition of the greatness of other ideals and their equally precious services.

The outstanding work of the missionaries in India, as I saw it, is



social work : education, healing of disease and the teaching of cleanliness and self-respect, improvement of the position of women and the outcasted—in short, the giving of value to individuality. I have never met any Orientals to whom the metaphysic of Christianity was an especial boon—because that of course came from the Orient, and they have plenty of it. But when to one of these submerged millions, as to a slave of old, comes the news—under the Christian formula—that he is free, free spiritually and free intellectually and materially as fast as he can take the education and other opportunities that Christian messengers hold out to him, it would be a strange slave indeed who did not respond with whole-hearted acceptance of the Christian religion. What have the philosophic subtleties of his exclusive Hindus done for him?\*

But there is sometimes a risk in suggesting to a missionary that some of the benefits of Christianity may be the benefits of democracy and the developing social solidarity of the newer civilizations. Or that the Hinduism, Buddhism and other ancient creeds of a socially backward Orient may have something to offer the Westerner.

When I ventured to hint as much to Miss Shearer, the most progressive of my missionary friends, she shook her head, strongly dissenting. "No," she replied. "But I'm not narrow. Our missionary training isn't narrow—we had a course on Hindu philosophy from our Christian professors at the training school."

"But if an Indian girl wanted to study American literature, should you send her to Miss Sorabji or Lady Bose?" I asked.

"That's beside the point. Religion is a very different matter. We want to see everything through Christian eye."

"Yes, I know. Those books you gave me to read—exposition of Indian religions by Christian writers—always present a subject through the lens of the man who has settled his point of view beforehand. If the beliefs and practices aren't good, they aren't Christian. If they are good, whatever is good in them is borrowed from the Christian religion. Why need we assert so clamorously that all the good and truth in the world belong to us? Surely there were good and truth in it before two thousands years ago!"

"Not the pure truth as Christ taught it," said Miss Shearer firmly.

"But you've read the pure truth taught by the Buddha and by Sri Krishna, whose words the poet of the *Bhagavadgita* records—"

\* One tired of such cheap and shallow criticism. The writer forgets that it is the genius of the Hindus—their "philosophic subtleties" which, long long before Christianity came to India or even before it was born, evolved out of a heterogeneous population, most of whom were on the threshold of civilisation, the cohesive organisation known as the Hindu society, even the lowest strata of which even gave points to the average Westerner in respect of refinement and morality; and that that process of assimilation is still going on, not remarkable because of its slow workings. Surely Christianity cannot claim that this wonderful assimilative genius of the Hindus was her gift to Hinduism. The reason why there are untouchables among the Hindus has to be sought elsewhere than in their so called social exclusiveness.—Editor, P. B.



"Don't mention Sri Krishna to me, my dear! The practices of the Krishna cults, today—and the rites in the Kali temples, the scenes at the Jagannath festivals—you have only to study the degeneracies of modern Hinduism and Buddhism to be convinced of the imperfection of the teachings."

"I don't see that. Degeneracy is a peculiarity of all human institutions not excepting religious organizations. How should you like Christianity to be judged on its witchcraft, burnings, and hangings, its Inquisition horrors, its superstitions and degeneracies? And for a really fair comparison, we should have to wait till the Christian Church is five thousand years old!"

"The pure gospel of Christ will never degenerate," said Miss Shearer stiffly.

"Certainly it will not—nor the pure gospel of the Buddha and the other great religious teachers. And how startlingly alike all the original teachings are! Five hundred years before Christ, the Buddha preached: 'Practise the truth that thy brother is the same as thou..... Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good..... Do no injury to any living being, but be full of love, and kindness. That which is most needed, is a loving heart.' I challenge anybody to find more lofty and inspiring, or more helpful and practical, teachings, than are to be found in the gospel of the Buddha!"\*

(To be continued)

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda

The birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda falls this year on Tuesday, the 25th January. Public celebrations will naturally come off on the following Sunday, the 30th January. We shall be glad to receive reports of celebrations.

### A Noble Work among the Khasis in Assam

The following is the report of a very interesting and significant work that is being carried on by some members of the Ramakrishna Order among the Khasis of Assam. The work is still in an incipient stage. But the field is vast, and the output though not large is very promising. It has created great enthusiasm among the people amidst whom it is being done. These are all happy signs of the reawakened sense of the responsibilities of Hinduism towards the half-civilised hill-people who live on her borders and are easy prey to the propaganda

\* From ASIA, New York.



of alien missionaries. The work just now requires proper financing and we are sure the Hindus will render unstinted help to this noble cause.

The Report says :

It is well-known that owing largely to the propaganda of the Christian missionaries carried on among the backward classes, especially the inhabitants of the hill-tracts of Assam, thousands have left the fold of Hinduism and embraced the Christian faith. With a view to diffuse amongst them a true knowledge of Hinduism, of the religion of Vedanta as propounded by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, by placing before them an active and creative ideal through self-sacrifice and service, which is calculated to stimulate their progress, an experimental centre was started by us at Dissang Shella, Khasi Hills, Assam, early in 1924. The institution aims at the realisation of its objects without offering any kind of opposition to the Christian missionaries working among the Khasis.

The present activity of the Centre is mainly three-fold : (1) educational, (2) philanthropic and (3) religious.

*Educational* : From the very outset the work of the Centre has been predominantly educational. A free Middle English school of the Shella State is being managed by the Centre with two paid Khasi teachers. Though the school belongs formally to the Shella State, yet for all practical purposes it is left entirely in the hands of the Centre. This arrangement has been found to be most convenient inasmuch as it causes the least resistance and creates greater confidence among the local people. The State bears the entire expenses of the school by an annual subsidy of Rs. 500. To offer the Khasis greater facilities for higher education, the starting of a residential boarding house in the neighbourhood of Sylhet is in contemplation.

A word of explanation is necessary as to the need of starting our school when there are hundreds of them already existing among the Khasis through the agency of the Christian missionaries. A careful observer will not fail to notice that a great discontent prevails among the major portion (only one-sixth of the population being Christians, vide *The Presbyterian Church Report* for 1925) of the Khasis, who look upon the Mission schools as an infringement on their ancient traditions and religious beliefs, as the schools impart mainly the Christian theological education which they rightly look upon as detrimental to the realisation of their own religious ideals.

Our school provides scope for all Khasi students irrespective of caste and creed, without any way wounding their religious susceptibilities. It teaches along with the subjects pertaining to the M. E. standard, the Bengali language the knowledge of which is a great desideratum. The leading Khasis also keenly feel the need of a knowledge of the provincial languages of the plains. A Khasi monthly, *Ka Jingtal Ka Gospel*, edited by Mr. J. J. M. Nichols Roy, observes in its last February issue : If the Khasis do not sufficiently educate themselves within the coming twenty years and do not learn Bengali and Assamese, they will find it impossible to compete for Government service.



We have provision for girl students also in our school. The number of boys and girls at present on the roll is 60. Let us mention here that the authorities of the Ramakrishna Mission have agreed to grant stipends to one or two girls intending to go over to the *Nivedita Girls' School*, Calcutta, for receiving higher education. We are also going to start a boarding house near our Ashrama by the beginning of 1927, for the accommodation of students coming from distant homes.

Besides the M. E. school, we conduct a night school for the benefit of the adult population.

*Philanthropic* : Homeopathic and Bio-chemic medicines are given to the poor free of all costs. During the years of work altogether 2257 cases were treated of which 808 were new cases and the rest repeated.

*Religious* : Books are read and discussed, conversation classes are held and occasional lectures are delivered in the Khasi language, on religion, morality and education. The Sunday sittings are held in different places to suit the convenience of the attending villagers. Bengali music and devotional songs are also popularised. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are duly observed, as also such Hindu festivals as *Ratha-yātra*, *Jhulan* and *Dol-yātra*, all of which the Khasis enjoy immensely.

*Miscellaneous* : We take occasional trips to other Khasi states and speak to the people on the aims and objects of the Ramakrishna Mission and also on other useful topics. All these prove highly interesting to the people..... A small library containing the publications of the Ramakrishna Order has been opened. It contains also some monthlies, weeklies and bi-weeklies.

As regards the income of the Centre, besides the grant of Rs. 500 mentioned before, we receive occasional donations from friends far and near. The donations of the public of Sunanganj, Sylhet, have enabled the Ashrama to secure an orange garden on 30 years' lease, which is expected to be in near future a source of steady income. A gentleman from Kathiawad has recently sent us a donation of Rs. 100. To all these kind donors and sympathisers, the Ashrama is grateful. It specially mentions with grateful thanks the financial help it has received from the Sylhet Sri Ramakrishna Seva-Samiti.

*Prospects of the Work and its Present Needs* : By this time we are thoroughly acquainted with the customs and conventions of the Khasi people. They are perfectly Hinduistic, though of a crude type. Some of us have also mastered their language. We find that paid workers do not pull on satisfactorily with the people among whom they work. We want more and more of selfless, bold workers. For the opportunities are vast and the work glorious. Very easily the work may be extended all over the Khasi Hills. We are trying to train local Khasi workers. Ours is quite a new move among the Khasis and two years of patient and steady work have given it a good grounding. Now we want only workers and money to make it a big and far-reaching success. We want a permanent fund to support the workers to be placed in different parts of the Hills as also to main-



tain a batch of reserve and propaganda workers. We want a magic lantern with plenty of slides for our schools. We want funds to equip the library properly and to publish books in the Khasi language which is so necessary for the wide propagation of our ideals. We also want a house of our own, the present one being rented.

We know the output of our work is not yet striking in magnitude. But it must be conceded that we have laid on ourselves a very heavy responsibility to fulfil a neglected function of our religion and society. Would we apathetically look on when thousands of our brethren are being taken away from our religious fold? We appeal to all who feel for their religion and society to come forward with their best help, in kind or coin, in support of our work. Contributions may kindly be sent to me.

Sd. SWAMI ACHYUTANANDA,

*In charge of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama,*

Dissang Shella, P. O. Laitkynsew,

Khasi Hills, Assam.

### **Sir P. C. Roy at the Madras Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home**

Sir P. C. Roy was kind enough to visit the Home on the evening of Tuesday, the 30th November. He was taken round the building by Swami Saswatananda, the Resident Warden. He took more than an hour to visit the several departments and evinced keen interest in all the things shown round. After attending *pūja* he addressed the students of the Home on the impressions of his visit. In the course of his address he made the following observations :

"With the permission of the Swamiji, I should like to address you this evening though I am not quite well. I have visited many educational institutions in various parts of India managed by the public as well as by the Government; but nowhere have I seen an institution of this type. I have been taken by surprise and I could not even dream that I would see such things as I saw here to-day. Everything I have seen seems to be "Maya." I could not believe my eyes. Wherever I go, I am struck with the spotless cleanliness of the place. You know "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" and I feel as if the whole environment was surcharged with a divine atmosphere. I consider this day of my visit to your institution a red-letter day in my life. And I congratulate you all on your good fortune in having come under the roof of a noble institution where you are trained to make no distinction between "high and low." One noble feature of this institution is the



endeavour put forth to make you self-supporting. I have noticed with great pleasure that you are taught carpentry, weaving, carpet-making, smithy, and rattan work here. I am also glad to note that every one washes his own clothes and plates. I always make it a point to wash my clothes myself. And I am happy that everyone here tries to be self-reliant. One defect of all Hostels and Homes, as far as I have observed, is that boys who go there are struck with the palatial buildings and take to the life of luxury so strongly that they return to their villages after their study only to be invariably disgusted with their old life and surroundings. But in this institution, I find that menial work, simply because it is such, is not considered beneath one's dignity. The dignity of labour is a thing never to be forgotten. As I am in this building, I am appropriately reminded of Booker T. Washington who managed an institution for the Negroes and who devoted his life for their freedom and uplift. I hope you have a copy of his inspiring book, *Up from Slavery*, in your library. Your duty is to carry the spirit which you have imbibed here to the world outside when you go away from this institution. The motto of your life should be "Service to your Country." I am very glad that the Gita which is full of noble precepts is being studied here by you all. You should cultivate the spirit of patriotism, of genuine love for your country. By sacrifice alone real patriotism will be roused. In Japan, patriotism is the religion of the people. The same family may have members of diverse faiths, but they one and all profess the same religion—patriotism. I have been really struck with the catholicity of view in this place, especially the *pūja* hall, where there are paintings of the teachers of all religions. I am glad you are taught that in all religions the fundamental principles are the same.

"You live in a clean and moral atmosphere. Each one of you should rise as an electric light of unlimited candle power. When you go out after training, I am sure you will, with your radiating effulgence, illumine the depths of the darkness of the masses. In particular, the work which is awaiting you in India to-day is the spreading of mass education and the uplift of the suppressed classes. Finally I must not forget to thank the Swamiji for the great opportunity he has given me to visit this premier institution. I assure you that the memory of my visit to this noble institution will be for ever strongly imprinted on the tablet of my heart."

On behalf of the students and the staff, Swami Saswatananda thanked in adequate terms the honoured visitor of the evening.

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# Drabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत आगत



प्राप्य वराहचोषत ।

*Katha Upa. I. III. 14.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES

*12th February, 1921 (continued)*

The Swami said : “The Jnani who has realised the Advaita, behaves in the world in the same way as when we happen to bite our tongue—we are not angry with the teeth. As Swamiji said about the mirage, so long as we do not know its real nature, we are deceived by it. But knowing it, we are no longer taken in, though we see it again and again. Thus does the Jnani find the world and is not deluded by it.

“The difference between the Savikalpa and Nirvikalpa Samadhi is one of the degree of bliss, not of kind. For in both of them, the soul revels in God. The Nirvikalpa Samadhi is full of the infinite joy of Self-knowledge. It is not a barren vacuity, or the wall itself may be considered to be in the Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

“Sri Ramakrishna did not accord the highest place to Nirvana. When I once told him that Nirvana was my ideal, he reproved me for having such a low ideal. He said : “The ordinary man yearns for Nirvana. Have you not seen how



cautiously a novice in a game of dice moves his pieces, keeping them in pairs for fear of their being taken, and how anxious he is to reach the centre? But the expert takes no caution. He turns down his pieces deliberately even when the goal was almost reached, that the play may be prolonged. And the dice become so attuned in his hand that he can cast them in any pattern he likes. The 'expert' remains in the world and yet enjoys the fun.'

"When one has attained Liberation, one realises the pure 'motiveless' love. It is a love devoid of every thought of the power and glory of the Beloved. It is a love such as the Gopis bore to the child Krishna.

"The *Adhikārika Purusha*, the prophets and Incarnations that are born to uplift the world, have not to suffer the bondage of Karma. Their incarnation is not due to their past actions but to the will of God that thereby they may serve mankind. Indra and other gods are lords of 'spheres of enjoyment' and they have their fall. But the Jivan-muktas, the 'living-free', are all-powerful. It is true the *Brahma-Sutras* have stipulated that they cannot create or destroy the world, these functions being special to God. But it is not that they *lack* the power to create etc., they simply do not want to create. Possession of all powers is a *sine qua non* of the true realisation of Mukti.

"Sri Ramakrishna said that Shiva had taken one sip from the Ocean of Brahman, Shuka had touched it and Narada had only seen it.

"Some one has written expressing his disapproval of the constant festivity that has characterised the stay of M — here. But how can it be otherwise? The Bhagavatam says: 'Those who realise the eternal presence of the Lord in their heart, are endowed with perpetual good and beauty, and their life is imbued with an eternal festive joy.'

"Ramanuja came to where Surdas lived, and found Surdas daily complaining to the Lord of his sufferings and sorrows. He said: 'Why, O Surdas, do you thus complain of your sorrow to God? Sing His glory.' That is how Surdas came to compose his hundred thousand verses in praise of the Lord. Surdas who had been blind regained his eye-sight afterwards.

"It is God who does everything. Well says Tulsidas that profit and loss, life and death, fame and slander, all are His gifts. Yes, He is the only doer. But the plan of the world is



not all for Mukti, but also for *bhoga*, enjoyment. Thus people plod on through joy and sorrow till they 'wake up' and are emancipated. God is the motive power of both virtue and vice. And behind *all* of these is His beneficent will. Every action thus tends to an Ultimate Good.

"I had once a long discussion with L, — at Dakshineswar. I argued hard to prove that God was not really partial. He at last said: 'You are nice! You seem to look upon God as a little child requiring to be mothered and looked after by you!' I greatly appreciated the remark. You see, he was reared by Sri Ramakrishna himself."

7th March, 1921

In the afternoon of the *Shiva-ratri* day, the Swami said: "I can scarcely bear any criticism of Sankara. What are the credentials of the critics? Mere intellect? But Sankara was the very personification of the Knowledge Divine. If the preceding teachers have no weight with the critics, well, then they themselves will have no weight with posterity."

10th March, 1921

The Swami's conversation was very spirited and inspiring to-day. He dwelt with great fervour on Sannyasa.

"The world," he said, "is full of bewildering variety and extremely complex. All phenomena are the effect of *triguna*. But there is a higher state beyond them, which has been realised by Paramahansas. Whoever sees the underlying unity amidst these varieties has peace eternal. For then there is neither loss nor profit nor good nor evil. We have been reading these few days of the selfish prayers in the *Rudrâdhyâya*: 'Do not destroy my cows. Ever turn thy benignant face on me. Come putting aside thy bow and arrows. And humble my enemies and chastise them.' Well, such prayers come out of selfishness. But when one is rid of body-consciousness, one does not feel these desires. The highest conception is to think that everything is He. Failing that, it is best to think that He is the real agent behind all actions and He is causing us to act."



## **THE ORIGIN OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S DOCTRINE OF SERVICE**

**BY THE EDITOR.**

It is characteristic of Hindu thought that every stage of its evolution has been marked by a conflict between Jnana and Karma and their subsequent reconciliation. The scheme of life formulated by Hinduism is based on a consideration of the *totality* of life and experience, no aspects of them having been left out. Jnana and Karma represent the two hemispheres of life's rounded whole. Whereas Karma stands for the manifold experience and efforts at attaining the objects of varied desires, Jnana stands for the complete denial of life, activity and desire. In the one, we view life and reality as through a haze, which constantly changes and eludes the firm grasp of our mind. In the other, we stand face to face with the Real shining in its pristine effulgence and divested of all illusive investments, and know ourselves as one with it. Jnana and Karma thus stand for the two halves of existence, and neither can be ignored in a scheme for life's fulfilment and realisation, especially in its collective aspect. The problem in every age of Hindu history has therefore been how to reconcile them, how to conceive and guide the life of Karma so as to make it eventually lead to the supreme realisation, that thus a most comprehensive and synthetic view of life and experience can be arrived at.

From the ancient Vedic age down to the present day, this problem has re-crudesced periodically in new forms, impelled by the changing circumstances of the evolving time. In the Vedic age, the conflict arose between sacrificial rites and spiritual wisdom, the Atma-vidya of the Upanishads. The problem of the rishis was how to reconcile them. The traces of the clash and its solution are found scattered all over the Upanishads. We see therein how the Vedic gods are being idealised into the supreme Brahman and the Vedic ceremonies into meditations preliminary to the realisation of Brahman. In the age of Krishna, of the Mahabharata, we find the conflict re-appearing in a slightly modified form. Here the attempt is



at reconciling not merely Vedic rituals, but all work, ritualistic or secular, with the highest spiritual knowledge through the doctrine of Karma Yoga. We have also the famous story of Dharmavyadha, the pious butcher, who, possessed of the highest spirituality, had for the apparent means of its acquisition nothing but the faithful performance of his domestic and social duties. The Gautama Buddha faced the same conflict between rites and knowledge, but cut the Gordian knot by a total rejection of Karma. He did not try to harmonise them, but gave extreme predominance to Jnana. This is perhaps one of the reasons why his religion was finally banished from the land of its birth. Sankara also had to fight hard against the predominance of ritualism, as is remarkably evidenced by the rise of Kumarila, Mandana Misra and other advocates of ritualistic Karma, some of whom later on acknowledged the supremacy of Sankara's philosophy. Sankara's commentaries are loud with the din of the sturdy fight of the contending parties.

The fight till the time of Sankara was mostly between ritualism and self-knowledge. By then the superiority of Jnana or Bhakti was generally accepted and ritualism accorded a subordinate position. But we have seen that along with this, there was the further problem, as in the Gita, whether the performance of secular duties and works prompted by healthy desires leads to the realisation of life's highest ideal, though it is true it did not then assume the importance it has done in the present age. The true worth of ritualism, however, has been determined once for all. But the question of the value of secular work has been brought to the fore-front by the tremendous organisational activity and multifarious calls on individual attention and service, domestic, social, national, international, political, economical, etc., of the present day, none of which can be avoided with ease or without serious detriment to oneself. How should these be performed in order to be pathways to the realisation of God,—this is the all-important question. This question Swami Vivekananda laid on himself to answer.

His answer was the famous doctrine of the worship of the Divine in men. But it has not gone unchallenged, and the conflict is considered yet unsolved. For it has appeared in a different guise in a supposed contradiction between Sri Rama-



krishna and Swami Vivekananda. It is argued that Sri Ramakrishna who represents the fulness and perfection of Jnana and Bhakti, has spoken disparagingly of Karma and discouraged it. How is Swami Vivekananda to be reconciled with Sri Ramakrishna? Did not Sri Ramakrishna repeatedly warn some of his disciples against what they termed 'doing good to the world'? He retorted to Babu Kristodas Pal when the latter remarked that doing good to the country was their principal duty: "God alone can look after the world. Let man first realise God. Let him get Divine authority and be endowed with His power; then and then alone he can think of doing good to others." To another who wanted to build hospitals, etc., for the poor, he said: "When God appears before you, would you seek schools and hospitals of Him, or beg for Bhakti, Jnana, etc? Then give up all these thoughts of hospital-building and think of the Lord alone." Therefore it is argued that Karma, even selfless Karma, must be minimised as far as possible, and thought and energy should be devoted essentially to prescribed spiritual practices, and that if work is to be done at all, it must be done after God-realisation.

Behind this doubt and protest, there is more than the supposed disparity between Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji. It is the lingering trail of the historic quarrel between Jnana and Karma emerging in a new form. If Swami Vivekananda had not been a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, it is doubtful if his synthesis of Karma and Jnana would have been questioned thus, confirmed as it is by no less authorities than the Gita and the practice of many eminent saints. But Swamiji has taught nothing which is not of his Master. And we hold that his doctrine of service is as much a teaching of Sri Ramakrishna as the doctrine of the harmony of religions. We maintain that the doctrine of service is only another version of the doctrine of the harmony of religions and that the one cannot be without the other.

It is not always the words of the mouth that truly and completely reveal the spirit behind. The seeker of truth must search below the surface. He must search in the realm of spirit and not of word and form. It may be Sri Ramakrishna sometimes spoke against Karma; may be he wanted us to think more of God than of men. Quite possibly these had reference to special cases only. But is there nothing in



his practice and teachings to indicate that the doctrine of service is an essential part of them?

Various attempts have been made to trace it to Sri Ramakrishna. There is, for example, an occasion reported of the Master's life, when in a transcendental mood, he refuted the idea of *jivé dayâ*, of compassion to men, as a presumption on the part of a mortal, and emphasised instead the idea of service to God in men. It is said that Swamiji who was present on the occasion, was deeply impressed with the Master's words and felt a wide vista of thought open before him. He found that if work was exalted to the service of God, then every work, domestic or philanthropic, could be transmuted into an extremely potent method of God-realisation. It cannot be denied that this episode as well as the Master's great solicitude for the poor and miserable, manifest on many occasions, made some impression on the Swamiji's mind. But, as against this, it may be contended with justification that the Master has not otherwise preached the doctrine of service and that this incident forms but an insignificant detail of the Master's life, whereas the doctrine of service forms a very important, if not the central, part of Swamiji's teachings. Can we not derive this Swamiji's essential teaching from an equally essential teaching of Sri Ramakrishna?

The most unique of Sri Ramakrishna's teachings, it must be admitted, is the harmony of religions. What does it signify? Commonly understood, it is the admission of the approximately equal validity and worth of all existing religions, a belief that all religions are equally effective in guiding men to the Truth. But what are religions? Are they merely the well-known *isms*, Hinduism, Buddhism, Muhammadanism, Christianity, etc., and their different creeds? This is only a superficial view of the meaning of religion. Religion is the process of spiritual unfoldment in men. In the widest and the truest sense, the evolution of life and its struggle upwards to the light and reality of God, the entire process from the beginning to the end, is religion. Religion is not that part of life only, which is concerned with temple-going or hymn-singing. The whole of life, its every thought and action is religion. "Religion is the manifestation of the Divinity already in man"—thus did Swami Vivekananda define religion. If it is so, then is not every life a religion, since it is from the start a process of mani-



festation, conscious or unconscious, of the inherent Divinity? Therefore every life is a new religion, for every life differs from the others in the nature of that manifestation, in its temperament and outlook.

Every life a religion!—It means that every life is Divine, in whatever stage of evolution it may be. We easily concede that life or religion is Divine when it has reached the highest degree of development. But that state is only the culmination of a process which began with the first stirring of life. God does not enter a man's life only when he has become a saint. God was in it from the beginning. God was slowly asserting Himself through his joys and sorrows, good and evil, errors and truths, till at last His glory shone in untrammelled effulgence. Man does not travel from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lesser truth to higher truth. To one who has realised this truth, no man is human, but Divine. Harmony of religions is not therefore a harmony of the formal creeds merely, but of all life, of all human lives especially. It is to look upon and realise all men as the Divine in the process of various manifestation and self-fulfilment. This is the deeper significance of the doctrine of religious harmony. And therefore to perceive it truly we must learn previously to view every man as Divine. Without the vision of the Divine in man, it is vain to talk of religious harmony.

How to get that vision? Not merely through imagination can we get it. A fundamental change in our life is imperative. Not only should our *ideas* about men change, but also *behaviour*. Not merely in thought, but also in action and practice, must there be a profound transformation. A close analysis will reveal that our conception of our fellow-men is essentially related with our conception of life and reality. In order to bring about a change in the former, tremendous effort is therefore necessary. We have accustomed ourselves to think one way of men and things from our very birth, nay, for millions of previous births. Therefore a mere pious iteration of the idea of the Divinity of men will avail little. It must throb in every moment of our day—even the sub-conscious thought must be moulded accordingly. And above all it must transform and inspire our *actions*. For actions influence us more than thoughts. Therefore it must be *practised* assiduously. We must behave with men as we would with God if



He were to live with us in the flesh. We must worship men. We must dedicate all the love of our heart, all the intensity of our thought, and all our powers of action to their service. This is harmony of religions made real and practical. How can one perceive religious harmony unless one has learnt to serve men as God?

This is the deep psychological truth on which the twin doctrines of religious harmony and service are based. Swamiji felt their fundamental unity and therefore as the means to their realisation of religious harmony, he propounded the doctrine of service. Without the spirit of worshipful service, we cannot see the vision of the Divine in men. And without that vision we cannot perceive every life as the unfolding of the Divine, which is religion. This fact, we think, more than anything else, impelled Swamiji to preach the worship of men.

We find this conclusion confirmed by the practice of Sri Ramakrishna himself. It is well-known how, true to his own doctrine of the harmony of religions, he would teach every aspirant that came to him in conformity with the aspirant's spiritual temperament and outlook. He would make himself one with the disciple. He would visualise the ideal that inspired the disciple and the obstacles that impeded his progress, and help him onwards in his chosen path. But along with this, we find him practising the ideal of service as well. His practice was equally true to the twin ideals of religious harmony and service. Of course with him service took the form of *lila* or play. Service with the ordinary man begins as charity or compassion which serves to purify his mind. He then begins to catch occasional glimpses of the hidden Divinity in the objects of his service. This is the second stage. Service gradually deepens into worship. But when worship becomes profound and all-absorbing,—that is the third or the last stage—the revelation of the Divine in men becomes clearer and clearer, and service becomes *lila* or play with the Lord. With Sri Ramakrishna service was therefore *lila*. Every man had a place with him, none were refused. And he himself said that the realisation of *nara-lila*, that is to say, of the vision of the Divine in men, was the pinnacle of spiritual knowledge.

It was in the beginning of 1884 that Sri Ramakrishna, while in a trance, fell down and broke his arm. It took some time to cure. A profound spiritual fact lay behind the



incident, which he revealed more than a year after to some of his intimate disciples. He said: I am telling you a secret. Do you know why I love Purna, Narendra and others so dearly? I had once a vision of Jagannatha, and as I went to embrace him, I fell down and broke my arm. And it was revealed to me that now that I was born as a man, I must love the Lord in men." A few days after the incident he had said: "I now find that my spiritual outlook is undergoing a change. Long ago Vaishnavcharan told me that the highest spiritual wisdom was the vision of the Divine in men. I now really find that it is the Lord who is moving about in the forms of men, sometimes a saint, sometimes a fraud, at other times a knave. But all of them are God and none but God. So I say, God in the form of saint, God in the form of knave, God in the form of libertine . . . . I now often think how I can feed and entertain all these devotees. I feel it earnestly. That is why I ask one at a time to live with me that I may entertain him." Is this not the full realisation of Swamiji's doctrine of service? And do we not see that this service of the disciples was only an integral part of his practice of religious harmony?

A consideration of these facts leads us to the inevitable conclusion that Swamiji's doctrine of service did not originate with him, but was an interpretation of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual teachings and outlook. It is vain to hope to be a true follower of Sri Ramakrishna and of his principal doctrine of the harmony of religions without learning through worshipful service to perceive the inherent Divinity in every man. Verily Swamiji is the way, the infinite vista of spiritual progress, at the end of which shines the ineffable light of Sri Ramakrishna, and there is no easier and surer way to reach that Divine light than through him.

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## THE NATURE OF THE ATMAN

BY SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA

The conclusion at which the Advaitins have arrived regarding the nature of the Subject or the Atman or Brahman is that it is, looked at from the view-point of the Object or the universe, its creator, preserver and destroyer ;—"(Brahman is that) from which the origin, etc., of this (world proceed)," as the second aphorism of the *Brahma-Sutras* says ; but that in itself, it is ineffable and devoid of all determining qualities. It is the material and efficient cause of the universe. Without it, nothing can exist. But nothing of this universe as it is, is Brahman. It is just as is declared by that famous verse of the *Katha Upanishad* : "The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings, and much less this fire. He shining, everything shines after him, by his light all this is lighted."

According to the Advaita philosophy, the Atman which is the Subject is the only substance. From it the universe has originated. The *Mundaka Upanishad* after describing the "lower knowledge" as the Vedas and the Vedangas, says, "But the higher knowledge is that through which that Imperishable is known : The invisible, intangible, unoriginated, colourless, without eyes or ears, without hands or feet, the eternal, all-pervading, all-present, very subtle, this is the Unchanging which the wise know as the womb of beings. As the spider puts forth (the threads) and draws them back again, as herbs grow upon the earth, as from a living man hair comes out on the head and body, so from this Imperishable arises all the world."

From this and similar passages of the *Sruti* it becomes clear that neither the primordial matter of the materialist nor the individual soul of the solipsist is to be considered as the origin of the universe. The *Sruti* declares that an Intelligent Being is the cause of the universe. And that it is not an individual soul can be concluded from the following passage of the same scripture :

"This is the truth : As from a well-lit fire, sparks, of the same nature to it, arise thousand-fold, so, dear one, from the



Imperishable go forth manifold beings, and return into it again. For divine is the Spirit (Purusha), the formless, who is within and without, unborn, breathless, wishless, pure, yet higher than the highest Imperishable. From him arises breath, the understanding with all the senses, from him arise ether, wind, and fire, water and earth, the support of all."

Such majesty cannot belong to any individual soul, far less to matter.

The universe is guided by fixed laws and is instinct with a purposiveness. There must therefore be an omnipotent, omniscient Being behind it. That Being is the Atman.

"At the bidding of this Imperishable, O Gârgi, sun and moon are kept asunder from each other, at the bidding of this Imperishable, O Gârgi, heaven and earth are kept asunder from each other, at the bidding of this Imperishable, O Gârgi, the minutes and the hours, the days and nights, the half-months, the months, the seasons and the years are kept asunder. At the bidding of this Imperishable, O Gârgi, the streams run downward from the snowy mountains, some to the east, some to the west, each in its course ; at the bidding of this Imperishable, O Gârgi, men praise the generous men, gods depend on the sacrifices, the fathers on the offerings for the dead. Verily, O Gârgi, he who knows not this Imperishable, though in this world he offers and has offerings made, though he suffers penance many a thousand years, gains only a limited (reward) ; he who knows not that Imperishable, O Gârgi, and departs from this world, he, indeed, is miserable ; but he who, O Gârgi, knowing this Imperishable, departs from this world, he, indeed, is a Brâhmana. Verily, O Gârgi, this Imperishable is seeing, not seen, hearing, not heard, understanding, not understood, knowing, not known. For outside him there is no seer, outside him there is no hearer, outside him there is none with understanding, outside him there is none with knowledge. In this Imperishable, verily, O Gârgi, is the ether woven and interwoven."

How is this Imperishable (Brahman) related to the Jiva? The Chhandogya Upanishad beautifully says in the chapter of Svetaketu :

"As the bees, my son, make honey by collecting the juices of distant trees, and reduce them into one form ; and as



the juices have no discrimination so that they might say, I am the juice of this tree or that, in the same manner, my son, all these creatures, when they have become merged in the True, know not that they are merged in the True. Whatever these creatures are here, whether a lion, or a wolf, or a boar, or a worm, or a midge, or a gnat, or a mosquito, that they become again and again. Now that which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, Svetaketu, art it."

The identity of the individual soul (Jiva) and the Supreme Self (Brahman) is again and again indicated by the examples of rivers mingling their waters with the sea, seeds of the *nyagrodha* tree, withering of the branches of the plant, saline water, the ailing person, etc. And every example ends with the exhortation: "Now that which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Svetaketu, art it."

Thus that which is permanent and essential in the Jiva is one and identical with Brahman, the creator of the universe, the Subject. And the essence of the Vedanta is thus summed up in the following words: "In half a verse I shall tell you what has been taught in thousands of volumes: Brahman is true, the world is false; the Jiva is Brahman and nothing else."

But the conception of Brahman as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe is not the highest and the last conclusion. He is beyond all these. The Advaitin who describes the Self as all-powerful God also describes him as *pure* consciousness. He asserts that to look upon Brahman as the creator is not to see his *real* nature. His nature transcends all determination and has therefore been indicated as *Neti Neti*, 'Not this,' 'Not this.'

"Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and Infinity." This is how the Sruti describes the Self. But this is also a negative description. When Brahman is called Truth, it is meant that he is not illusory or unreal. Brahman is Knowledge, that is, he is not unconscious or insentient. He is Infinity, that is, he is not limited by time, space or causation. Brahman is bliss, that is to say, he is other than misery or affliction.

That which is insentient cannot illumine other things. Darkness cannot illumine objects but is itself illumined by light. The universe is insentient, it cannot illumine. It



appears illumined through the reflected light of Brahman. Brahman is light itself or something else would have been needed to illumine Brahman. He is the Primordial Light. It is no material light however. It is that of which the Chhandogya Upanishad says: "Light is his form, truth his resolve." All that is perceived is perceived through the light of Atman, but the Atman is perceived through no other light, because his own being is self-shining, and the sun etc., shine in and through him.

"That pure Brahman is the enlightener of (apparently) enlightened substances ; only those who have realised the Self can know him." Thus declares the Sruti. He is ever unknowable, for he cannot be pointed out as 'this' or 'that.' He is not to be *known*, for he is Knowledge itself. But he is also more than known. For he is the Self of our self and we are never more conscious of anything else than our own self. The Kena Upanishad says: "He is distinct from the known and above the unknown." Thus the unknown Brahman is not the "unknown" of the agnostics.

The root itself from which the word *Brahman* is derived suggests that Brahman is beyond all limitations. The root *brin̥ha* means 'to increase or enlarge.' There is nothing which can limit his expansion or enlargement. Brahman is not limited by any adjuncts and hence he is called Infinity. Time, space and causality are, absolutely speaking, unreal. These are mere superimpositions on Brahman caused by ignorance and cannot affect Brahman. He cannot be realised in his pure aspect unless all ideas of duality vanish away from the mind of the aspirant.

Worldly bliss is by nature fugitive, a pale reflection of the ineffable bliss of Brahman. All pleasant objects are such because they reflect the bliss of Brahman. "Verily, a husband is not dear that you may love the husband ; but that you may love the Self, therefore is the husband dear." Thus runs the exhortation of Yājñavalkya to his wife, Maitreyi. And this is true of wife, sons, wealth, the various castes, the world, the devas and all other created beings. "This Atman is more blissful than the sun, the riches, and even than all the dear objects of the world." "The other creatures only know a fraction of the immortal bliss of Brahman." Such is the Atman or Brahman, such the real nature of the Subject.



Though as the creator of the world, he is omnipresent, omniscient and endowed with infinite other qualities, in his transcendental aspect, he is beyond all attributes and can be designated only by the well-known Vedic formula of *Neti Neti Atma*.

It may be argued that it is useless to admit the existence of an entity which we do not know, nor understand, nor can even prove. The Buddhist would say that if there really exists such an entity it is better to call it void. But the Advaitins refuse to call it so. For that would amount to its denial. He is very positive about the existence of Atman or Brahman. In fact he is more sure of the existence of Atman than of anything else. Without the Atman the whole universe would become nothing. "He verily becomes non-existent who knows Brahman as non-existent. He who knows Brahman as existent, becomes himself thereby existent." "The Atman exists," the Vedantin says, "but words fail to describe him." "I do not think I know Brahman well nor do I know that I do not know him. He among us knows Brahman who knows him to be. I cannot say that Brahman is known nor can I say that he is unknown." Thus does the Sruti refer to the knowledge of Brahman. It adds: "It is known to him to whom it is unknown; he knows it not to whom it is known. It is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know."

This is the mystic description of the nature of that supreme realisation. How can one describe the nature of Brahman who transcends speech and mind? If a salt doll seeks to measure the depth of the ocean, it melts away as soon as it touches the water. Even so is the human mind engulfed in the infinitude of Brahman in trying to know it.

Simply because we cannot explain him, it does not follow that he does not exist. We cannot explain even ordinary things sometimes. That does not make them non-existent. Whenever an unfamiliar object is sought to be explained, the help of analogy is taken. But analogy has no scope in the case of One who is the only existence, who is without a second. A man who has not realised Brahman cannot understand his nature. "He alone knows who knows." "He exists"—only this can be said of him. "The ultimate truth is revealed to him alone who realises that the Atman exists."



Knowledge means objectification, limitation by the mind. That which is beyond the mind is not known. If the absolute Brahman becomes known, he does not remain absolute. Therefore it is absurd to try to *know* the absolute Brahman. We can only become one with him. The best definition of Brahman as given in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad runs thus: "It is that, O Gârgi, which the Brahmanas call the Imperishable. It is neither gross nor fine nor short nor long, nor red (like fire) nor adhering (like water), nor shady nor dark, nor wind nor ether, not sticky (like gum), without taste, without smell, without eye or ear, without voice, without understanding, without vital force, and without breath, without mouth and without measure, without inner or outer ; nothing whatsoever does it consume, nor is it consumed by any." Again, "The fourth is neither that which is conscious of the subjective, nor that which is conscious of the objective, nor that which is conscious of both, nor that which is simple consciousness, nor that which is a mass of all sentiency, nor that which is all unconsciousness. It is unseen, transcendent, unapprehensible, uninferable, unthinkable, indescribable, the essence of the consciousness of Self, the negative of all illusion, the ever-peaceful, all-bliss, the one unit ;—this indeed, is the Atman, it should be known."

Such being the true nature of the Subject, the Atman, the Brahman, it is ever unknown and unknowable, but more than known and knowable.

## A BLIND MOVEMENT

BY ONE WHO WAS A NON-BRAHMIN.

The collapse of non-Brahminism in the last general elections has its lessons beyond its merely political consequences. It has demonstrated not only the political futility of its ideals and methods, but also how shallow, insignificant and naive is its underlying philosophy. The philosophy of anything is not quite tangible to the common mind. But it constitutes all the same a very potent part of it. And no considerable movement can win success, unless it is grounded on and backed by a sound philosophic consciousness. The immediate cause of the fall of political non-Brahminism is itself significant. Here the conflict was between the narrow prospects of communalism and the larger freedom of the national life. Non-Brahminism had failed to recognise the fact that in the present age and



stage of mental evolution, no soul can find rest in the cramping atmosphere of communalism. It must pant and pine for the emancipating atmosphere of the wider and deeper life of the nation. Not always is earthly profit sought by the human mind. Sacrifice of lower interests is sweeter and more delectable to it if thereby it can be reborn into a truer freedom.

A day will come—and that soon—when the call of the Sanatana Dharma and Samaj will claim as insistently as that of the nation's politics to-day the devoted homage of the non-Brahmins. They prefer now to place themselves in resentful opposition against the Brahmins, as if in such angry distinction lies the fulfilment of their final destiny. They would fain rid themselves of all contact with the Brahmins, social, religious, political or cultural. This attitude is doomed to fail as surely as justicite politics. For the causes in both cases are identical. No community to-day can thrive in an atmosphere of dissension. It cannot deny, even if it so desires, the imperious demands of the larger life of the Samaj. We are apt to belittle the importance of the social implications of the national struggle under the overbearing stress of the unduly magnified importance of our political problems. But the Samaj is not dead, and signs are already patent to those who have eyes to see, of purely social problems becoming as important, if not more, as the political. And on the day of reckoning, the social philosophy of non-Brahminism will collapse like the proverbial house of cards.

Yet, non-Brahminism is real. It is not provoked by imaginary grievances. The smouldering fire in its heart is nursed by genuine fuel, and its groans, though not properly articulate, rise out of deep-seated wounds. Much has to be done by non-Brahmins. Only their present methods are unfortunate. And there must be a change of outlook. Their philosophy must become deeper and more comprehensive. And above all, their struggle must become impersonal and not resentful against any men or community. We may almost lay down a rule for all social reform : Never make grievance against persons or communities, but struggle on impersonal basis. In all matters relating to the collective life, the problems are more often than not the result of certain forces of which both parties, the oppressor and the oppressed, are victims. They are victims of the system. It is no use destroying the persons who happen to be the instrument of that system. For when they are destroyed, the system will seek other agencies. The fight must be against the forces themselves. To that end, we must make a deep study of their nature and workings and avail ourselves of that knowledge to break our fetters. Our struggle otherwise will be superficial, create new problems at every turn and act disruptively on ourselves as well as on the entire Samaj.

The non-Brahmin movement unfortunately has been reactionary from the beginning. It is, we repeat, always suicidal for a section of the



Samaj to rise fighting against another section, especially so in the Hindu Samaj. A little penetration will show that if there are ugly defects in the present caste system, they are not due to any particular caste, but the entire Samaj itself. And there are only two ways in which those defects can be remedied; either by rejecting the entire social system and establishing a new one, or by understanding its laws and ways and utilising them. The first remedy is beyond the power of any individual community or all communities together. The second is therefore the only possible course. But the non-Brahmins did not unfortunately use it. They made their struggle a class-war, a war against the Brahmins.

But the Brahmins are no more responsible for their sufferings than they themselves are for those of the pariahs. The one apparently great fault of the Brahmin community, of the south especially, is their strict conservatism. They are not flexible and mobile enough. But is that a *fault* after all? Only the ignorance of the history of Hindu social evolution can call it such. Whenever a society becomes rich in culture, it evolves a section to conserve and retain it intact as a trust for the whole. The more refined a culture, the greater is the need of such conservatism. A spiritual culture specially requires to be most carefully tended and protected. The safest way then is a jealous maintenance of the religious and cultural traditions. The Hindu Samaj felt this need keenly and found its fulfilment in the Brahmin community. It is true that conservatism is not all good, as nothing in the world is, for that spirit worked even in those spheres where one could easily be liberal. But it is a defect inherent in all institutions. Every society develops through the interaction of liberal and conservative forces. In the Hindu Samaj, the Brahmins represent the conservative element, holding sacred and inviolable every tradition and custom, keeping wakeful watch on the interior and the frontiers of its dominions against unwarranted entrances and exits and transgressions of its laws, and handing down the wisdom of our fathers, seasoned and chastened by the experience of every passing generation, to the generations of posterity. The liberal element was typified by the Kshatriyas who unfortunately are not now existent, and is perhaps functioning through other communities. It inaugurated reforms and propagated new ideas, but was always respectfully submissive to the veto of the conservative Brahmins. Between them was held steady the helm of the social bark. Neither of them can be allowed to hold unchecked sovereign sway or eliminated without great peril to the Samaj. It does not matter which communities represent them,—but they must function in the Samaj. It is extreme ignorance to accuse a particular class for having discharged what is after all a national function. It is simply enacting the ludicrous fable of the stomach and the limbs. As it is, the task of the Brahmins is a thankless one. But when the extreme liberalism of the Buddhistic reform forced the portals of the mother-church wide open for all sorts of civilised, semi-



civilised and savage races and their indigenous customs and traditions to enter in, had there not been the steadying and controlling influences of conservatism as represented by the Brahmins, Hinduism would have been nowhere to-day, and India's culture and civilisation would have become the pet study of a few Indologists. Indeed without the conservative Brahmins, the Vedic religion would have wholly disappeared.

Therefore it was a little thoughtless and ungrateful of the non-Brahmins to have made their uplift movement a revolt against the Brahmins. Little do they perceive that even their present level of culture is largely owing to this much-maligned Brahmins! Do they remind themselves that many of their ancestors were superstitious Buddhists and Jains and that it is the Brahmins that made them Hindus again? Should the non-Brahmins ponder over these facts, they would not be so eager to eat up the Brahmins; they would be grateful to them and not hate them.

We have doubts whether the non-Brahmins realise the implication of this hatred. Hatred always divides and separates. Do the non-Brahmins desire to cut themselves off from the higher sections of the Hindu Samaj and all the wealth of culture that they conserve? It will be an evil day indeed for themselves and the Hindu Samaj when such a project will be seriously harboured by them. But we are sure the non-Brahmins will feel indignant if such a desire is imputed to them. Yet their actions are contrary. Nearly thirty years ago when the non-Brahmin movement was in its infancy, Swami Vivekananda presaged the dangerous possibility of the non-Brahmins setting themselves against and separating entirely from the Brahmins, degrading thereby the entire Hindu culture and civilisation. This was no vain imagination. Looking beneath the surface, we do perceive destructive forces working towards that doom. The Shermadevi Gurukula controversy brought them startlingly on the surface. But the non-Brahmins unfortunately scarcely feel how disruptively their policy and mentality are working on the Samaj.

For what do we find? They are trying to prove that they owe nothing to the Brahminical, that is to say, Sanskritic culture. In two respects especially, this spirit of alienation is working, in religion and literature. The Shaiva Siddhantism which is the creed of a large majority of the non-Brahmins, is being shown to be of independent origin and growth. The Tamil language is similarly quite independent of Sanskrit, and there is, so far as we know, a tendency among them to eliminate even those words which have been incorporated into it from Sanskrit. And only recently in its Madura conference, the Justice party passed a resolution on instituting a system of non-Brahmin priests to officiate at the religious ceremonies and rites of the non-Brahmin classes. Is Swamiji's foreboding going to be fulfilled? The writer well remembers how one, a very influential gentleman in that community, once asked him about the relation of the Bengali



language with Sanskrit. Was not Bengali an indigenous language? Why did it then ally itself with Sanskrit? It was quite a surprise to him to be told that Sanskrit—either language or culture—was impersonal and inter-communal, a device for synthetising the divergent elements of literature, culture, social economy and religion, that have entered the fold of Hinduism, and that therefore no individual community need consider it a foreign tyrant or the Brahmins' personal property. By imbibing the Sanskrit culture the different communities gain in refinement. Even the Brahmins did not all have Sanskrit as their dialect, though it is true that as the community specially entrusted with the preservation of the finest culture of the Samaj they had to cultivate it more deeply and intensively than the other communities. Sanskrit, in its literary aspect, refined the intellect; in its socio-economic aspect which is the caste system, purified and regulated conduct; and in its spiritual aspect, it taught the highest and the unifying wisdom. The Sanskrit culture is a mould for unifying and regulating the multifarious elements of the Samaj.

It may be true that Shaiva Siddhanta is of independent origin. This claim is not special. All Pauranika creeds have such indigenous origin. But if Shaiva Siddhanta should remain an integral part of Hinduism, it must unite with the Vedic philosophy. It is not that thereby it will be altered in any essential degree, but it will certainly be more perfect and richer and its votaries will win a wider field of intercourse. Human nature abhors segregation, it delights and flourishes in the realisation of unity. The communities do require for their own benefit to establish deeper relations with each other on the basis of a common plan of conduct, common outlook on life and unifying ideals of philosophy and religion.

The separatist tendencies of the non-Brahmins therefore can do no good to themselves. United we grow, divided we perish. The non-Brahmins should not lay arrogant emphasis on the independence of their literature or religion, but should rather realise their similarity and fundamental unity with those of the other sections, especially the higher sections, of the Samaj and gain through it greater social prestige by means of greater and greater assimilation of the Sanskrit culture. Therefore it was that Swami Vivekananda, speaking on the non-Brahmin problem (then in its incipient stage) at Madras after his first return from the West, thus exhorted them: "The only safety, I tell you men who belong to the lower castes, the only way to raise your condition is to study Sanskrit. and this fighting and writing and frothing against the higher castes is in vain, it does no good, and it creates fight and quarrel, and this race, unfortunately already divided, is going to be divided more and more. The only way to bring about the levelling of caste is to appropriate the culture, the education which is the strength of the higher castes." "To the non-Brahmin castes I say, wait, be not in a hurry. Do not seize every oppor-



tunity of fighting the Brahmin, because you are suffering from your own fault. Who told you to neglect spirituality and Sanskrit learning? What have you been doing all this time? Why have you been indifferent? Why do you now fret and fume because somebody else had more brains, more energy, more pluck and go, than you? Instead of wasting your energies in vain discussions and quarrels in the newspapers, instead of fighting and quarrelling in your own homes,—which is sinful,—use all your energies in acquiring the culture which the Brahmin has, and the thing is done. Why do you not spend millions to bring Sanskrit education to all the castes of India? The moment you do these things, you are equal to the Brahmin. That is the secret of power in India."

Surely those who can read the signs of the times will appreciate the supreme value of Swami Vivekananda's prescription.

It is interesting to speculate about the future of the non-Brahmin movement. We ourselves will regret its death. For the non-Brahmins undoubtedly require uplifting. Great things are in store for them. The higher castes have played themselves out; their powers are exhausted. The energy that now lies dormant in the non-Brahmin community, must become dynamic. But not in the way the prelude has shown. The platform on which great sages and prophets have acted cannot be allowed to be desecrated by buffoonish pantomimes. The non-Brahmins must be deeper, wiser, more thoughtful and patient. Slowly they must learn their lessons and wisely act. Let them imbibe the Sanskrit culture more and more in all its aspects. In this also lies the great opportunity of the Brahmins to perform the last, and perhaps the noblest, sacrifice of their life. For the Brahmin community is destined to die. Its play is over. All efforts at revivifying it will be futile. Let it then gloriously make its exit, by bequeathing in the most generous spirit the treasures it has accumulated through millenniums to the less fortunate communities. This act of generosity will heal once for all the wounds rankling in the heart of the non-Brahmin communities.

Many Brahmins fondly hope that their ancient glory will come back again. Strange, they do not see that the altered conditions make it absolutely impossible! There has been a slow but steady change in the scheme of the Varnashrama Dharma from the days of Buddha. The Brahmins had been the special custodians of spiritual knowledge and social integrity. But even in the pre-Buddhistic age there was a revolt against this idea. And slowly the duty and function of preserving spiritual culture began to be transferred from them to a class of men who were outside the Samaj,—the monastics. And to-day the Sannyasins have almost taken the place of the Brahmins and the Brahmins are totally

\* How spirituality and Sanskrit learning at once raise a community in social estimation is evidenced by the signally successful work of Sri Narayana Guru Swami of the Thiya community of Malabar.—*Editor, P. B.*



secularised. In very ancient times, the monks were *aranyakas*, forest-dwellers. It was the married rishis that ministered to the spiritual wants of the people. But as days wore on, monks approached the householders more and more till to-day they not only look to their spiritual welfare but also to their physical and intellectual needs. The monks having taken the duties of the Brahmins on themselves, the Brahmins are superfluous and can but take to less important occupations. And this as a matter of fact they have done. Except in some very insignificant caste regulations, the difference between them and the higher non-Brahmin castes is almost nil. It behoves them therefore to prepare for the inevitable and rather help than retard by reactionary movements the evolution of the Samaj. But perhaps it does not much matter whether the Brahmins are liberally disposed towards them or not, except that their indifference or hostility will react adversely on themselves. It is necessary however that the present leaders and trustees of the Hindu spiritual culture, the monks, should properly realise their responsibilities towards the culturally backward communities. And we may say that they are responding quite bravely and generously to these new requirements.

An individual or a community has far larger interests now than the purely communal ones. The claims of the country, for example, even if they conflict with the claims of the community, must have the right of precedence. The claim of Truth is yet more urgent. And all these higher ideals are calling more and more urgently at the present time than at any time before. Every man is feeling secretly drawn towards the noblest ideals. Any movement, therefore, that seeks of its followers a denial of those higher ideals, is doomed to die. It is paradoxical that in spite of the most sordid manifestations of individual, communal or racial greed, the present age is yet the strongest in its desire for the realisation of the highest ideals of humanity. The greedy perish. But those that listen to the call of the Ideal are saved and prosper. In India at least it is assuredly true that without being based on the most catholic principles and aspiring after the highest, no reform or struggle shall achieve any permanent success. The failure of non-Brahminism in the last elections points to that. Its narrow and greedy communalism jarred on the nobler spirits of its own community. The needs of the nation loomed larger than those of the community before their emancipated vision. Besides, only the call of the highest draws out the best in men. The day of reckoning is not yet come. Politically it came and decided against non-Brahminism. But culturally, spiritually, socially, it is yet to come. We watch for redeeming signs, but see them nowhere. Only an ignorant self-sufficiency and exultation, but no purposive struggle. Only anger, jealousy and hatred, but no illuminating knowledge of facts, historical consciousness or understanding of the underlying social laws. Can anything be more pathetic?



## REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(From old letters written at Thousand Island Park, New York,  
in the summer of 1895.)

BY MRS. MARY C. FUNKE.

July 19. Dearest M., C. and I are well and happy and we certainly do appreciate the whole-hearted welcome we have received from all the members of the household at Miss Dutcher's cottage.

Such a beautiful spot! There is a large class room and a kitchen on the ground floor and a number of bedrooms on the second floor. The Swami has a private suite with a separate entrance by an outside stairway. There is a small veranda attached to his room to which he invites us every evening. The view is lovely, as we are higher up than any of the other cottages. We gaze over the tree-tops and for miles the beautiful St. Lawrence River winds its way.

We are deeply touched by the very cordial reception given to us who were strangers. Even the Swami had never met us, personally, although we had attended all his lectures given in Detroit during the winter of 1894. The joy of it to be so sweetly received by him!

We were merely frightened to death when we finally reached the cottage, for neither the Swami nor his followers at Thousand Island Park had the remotest idea of our existence, and it seemed rather an impertinent thing for us to do, to travel seven hundred miles, follow him up, as it were, and ask him to accept us. But he did accept us—he did—the Blessed One!

It was a dark rainy night but we could not wait. Every moment was precious and our imagination was stirred up to the nth degree. We did not know a soul in the place but finally we hit upon the plan of making inquiries at the various shops and thus find out where Miss Dutcher lived. At one place we were told that there was a cottage occupied by a Miss Dutcher and that a "foreign looking man who dressed queerly" was staying there.



Then we knew our quest was ended and we found a man with a lantern who went ahead of us.

Up, up the wet and slippery path! It seemed as if we were taking one step up and two back, it was so slippery. The first thing we heard when we reached the house was the rich, beautiful voice of the Swami who was talking to those who had gathered on his porch. Our heart-beats could have been *heard*, I truly believe. His hostess asked him to come downstairs to see us as "two ladies from Detroit" and he greeted us so sweetly! It was like a benediction. "I like Detroit," he said. "I have many friends there, isn't it?" And what do you think? Instead of our staying at a hotel or boarding house, as we had expected, those dear people insisted upon our becoming members of the household. Our hearts sang pœans of praise.

So here we are—in the very house with Vivekananda, listening to him from 8 o'clock in the morning until late at night. Even in my wildest dreams I could not imagine anything so wonderful, so perfect. To be with Vivekananda! To be accepted by him! Surely we shall wake up and find it all a dream. For in our *dreams* we have sought the Swami, now, Reality! *Are* we "such stuff as dreams are made of?"

Oh, the subline teaching of Vivekananda! No nonsense, no talk of "astrals," "imps," etc., but God, Jesus, Buddha. I feel that I shall never be quite the same again for I have caught a glimpse of the Real.

Just think what it means to listen to a Vivekananda at every meal, lessons each morning and the nights on the porch, the eternal stars shining like "patines of bright gold"! In the afternoon, we take long walks and the Swami literally, and so simply, finds "books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good (God) in everything." And this same Swami is so merry and fun-loving. We just go *mad* at times.

Later. We have been soaring on the Heights, since I last wrote you. Swami tells us to forget that there is any Detroit for the present—that is, to allow no personal thoughts to occupy our minds while taking this instruction. We are taught to see God in *everything* from the blade of grass to man—"even in the diabolical man".

Really, it is almost impossible to find time to write here. We put up with some inconveniences as it is so crowded. There



is no time to relax, to rest, for we feel the time is all too short as the Swami leaves soon for England. We scarcely take time to array ourselves properly, so afraid are we of losing some of the precious Jewels. His words *are* like jewels and all that he says fits together like a wonderfully beautiful mosaic. In his talks he may go ever so far afield but always he comes back to the one fundamental, vital thing—"Find God! Nothing else matters."

I especially like Miss Waldo and Miss Ellis, although the whole household is interesting. Some unique characters. One, a Dr. Wright of Cambridge, a very cultured man, creates much merriment at times. He becomes so absorbed in the teaching that he, invariably, at the end of each discourse ends up with asking Swamiji, "Well, Swami, it all amounts to this in the end, doesn't it? *I am Brahman, I am the Absolute.*" If you could only see Swami's indulgent smile and hear him answer so gently, "Yes, Dokie, you are Brahman, you are the Absolute, in the real essence of your being." Later, when the learned doctor comes to the table a trifle late, Swami, with the utmost gravity but with a merry twinkle in his eyes, will say, "Here comes Brahman" or "Here is the Absolute."

Swamiji's fun-making is of the merry type. Sometimes he will say, "Now I am going to cook for you!" He is a wonderful cook and delights in serving the "brithrin." The food he prepares is delicious but for 'yours truly' too hot with various spices; but I made up my mind to eat it if it strangled me, which it nearly did. If a *Vivekananda* can cook for me, I guess the least I can do is to eat it. Bless him!

At such times we have a whirlwind of fun. Swamiji will stand on the floor with a white napkin draped over his arm, *a la* the waiters on the dining cars, and will intone in perfect imitation their call for dinner,—"Last call fo' the dining cah. Dinner served."—Irresistibly funny. And then, at table, such gales of laughter over some quip or jest, for he unfailingly discovers the little idiosyncrasies of each one—but never sarcasm or malice—just fun.

Since my last letter to you when I told you of Swamiji's capacity for merriment, so many little things have occurred to make one see how varied are the aspects of Vivekananda. We are trying to take notes of all that he says but I find myself



lost in listening and forget the notes. His *voice* is wondrously beautiful. One might well lose oneself in its divine music. However, dear Miss Waldo is taking very full notes of the lessons and in that way they will be preserved.

Some good fairy must have presided at our birth—C.'s and mine. We do not, as yet, know much of Karma and Reincarnation but we are beginning to see that both are involved in our being brought into touch with Swamiji.

Sometimes I ask him rather daring questions, for I am so anxious to know just how he would react under certain conditions. He takes it so kindly when I in my impulsive way sometimes "rush in where angels fear to tread." Once he said to some one, "Mrs. Funke rests me, she is so naive." Wasn't that dear of him?

One evening, when it was raining and we were all sitting in the living room, the Swami was talking about pure womanhood and told us the story of Sita. *How* he can tell a story! You *see* it and all the characters become real. I found myself wondering just how some of the beautiful society queens of the west would appear to him—especially those versed in the art of allurements—and before I took time to think, out popped the question and immediately I was covered with confusion. The Swami, however, looked at me calmly with his big, serious eyes and gravely replied, "If the most beautiful woman in the world were to look at me in an immodest or unwomanly way, she would immediately turn into a hideous, green frog, and one does not, of course, admire frogs!"

Apropos of my name something so funny happened. One day, we all walked down to the village and passed a glass-blower's tent. Swami was much interested in this and held a whispered conversation with the glass-blower. Then he asked us to take a walk through the main street of the village and upon our return the glass-blower handed him sundry mysterious packages which proved to contain a gift for each of us, a large crystal ball, each one different with our names blown in the glass "With the love of Vivekananda." Upon reaching the house, we opened our packages. *My* name was spelled "Phunkey." We were convulsed with laughter but not where he could hear us. He never having seen my name written, "Phunkey" was the result.

And he was so sweet, so gentle and benign all that evening.



just like an indulgent father who had given his children beautiful gifts, although many of us were much older than he.

The Swami has accepted C. as one fitted for his work in India. She is so happy. I was very disappointed because he would not encourage me to go to India. I had a vague idea that to live in a cave and wear a yellow robe would be the proper thing to do if one wished to develop spiritually. How foolish of me and how wise Swamiji was! He said, "You are a householder. Go back to Detroit, find God in your husband and family. *That is your path at present.*"

Later. This morning we went to the village and Swami had tin-types taken of himself at our request. He was so full of fun, so merry. I am trying to write you in class as there is literally no other time. I am sitting near the Swami and he is saying these very words, "The Guru is like a crystal. He reflects perfectly the consciousness of all who come to him. He thus understands how and in what way to help." He means by this that a Guru must be able to see what each person needs and he must meet them on their own place of consciousness.

Now he has closed the class for the morning and he has turned to me, "Mrs. Funke, tell me a funny story. We are going to part soon and we must talk funny things, isn't it?" Alas, he leaves on Monday.

We take long walks every afternoon and our favorite walk is back of the cottage down a hill and then a rustic path to the river. One day there was olfactory evidence of a pole-cat in the vicinity and ever since Swami will say, "Shall we walk down Skunk Avenue?"

Sometimes we stop several times and sit around on the grass and listen to Swami's wonderful talks. A bird, a flower, a butterfly, will start him off and he will tell us stories from the Vedas or recite Indian poetry. I recall that one poem started with the line, "Her eyes are like the black bee on the lotus." He considered most of our poetry to be obvious, banal, without the delicacy of that of his own country.

Monday, August 12th. Alas, he has departed! Swamiji left this evening at 9 o'clock on the steamer for Clayton where



he will take the train for New York and from there sail for England.

The last day has been a very wonderful and precious one. This morning there was no class. He asked C. and me to take a walk as he wished to be alone with us. (The others had been with him all summer and he felt we should have a last talk.) We went up a hill about half a mile away. All was woods and solitude. Finally he selected a low-branched tree and we sat under the low-spreading branches. Instead of the expected talk, he suddenly said, "Now we will meditate. We shall be like Buddha under the Bo Tree." He seemed to turn to bronze, so still was he. Then a thunder-storm came up, and it poured. He never noticed it. I raised my umbrella and protected him as much as possible. Completely absorbed in his meditation, he was oblivious of everything. Soon we heard shouts in the distance. The others had come out after us with raincoats and umbrellas. Swamiji looked around regretfully, for we *had* to go, and said, "Once more am I in Calcutta in the rains."

He was so tender and sweet all this last day. As the steamer rounded the bend in the river, he boyishly and joyously waved his hat to us in farewell and he had departed indeed.

As I finish these brief reminiscences, the calendar tells me that it is February 14th, 1925—just thirty one years almost to the very hour I first saw and heard Swamiji at the Unitarian Church.

Ah, those blessed, halcyon days at Thousand Island Park! The nights all glowing with the soft mystery of moonlight or golden starlight. And yet the Swami's arrival amongst us held no mystery, apparently. He came in simple guise.

We found later that anything which smacked of the mystery-monger was abhorrent to him. He came to make manifest the Glory and Radiance of the Self. Man's limitations are of his own making. "Thine only is the hand that holds the rope that drags thee on." This was the motif running through the Swami's teaching.

With infinite pains he tried to show us the path he himself had trod. After thirtyone years Swamiji stands out in my consciousness a colossal figure—a cleaver of bondage, knowing



when and where not to spare. With his two-edged flaming sword came this Man "out of the East"—this Man of Fire and Flame and some there were who received him and to those who received him he gave Power.

*Such was Vivekananda !*

## THE IDEALS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION

BY PRINCIPAL KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA, M.A.

Rajendra College, Faridpur, Bengal

*(Continued from page 19)*

The Ramkrishna Mission was founded by Swami Vivekananda in the year 1897. The success that has attended its endeavours within the last thirty years fills one with hope and joy. That what has been done is very creditable goes without saying. Still a great deal more has to be done. The whole country must be dotted over with the institutions of the Ramkrishna Mission. Besides it is a fact that there are repeated calls from Europe and America for more preachers, but the Mission is unable to meet the demand for paucity of workers. So what is wanted now is more men and more money—but men above all. The whole world must be deluged with the spirituality of India. The trumpet of Vedanta must be sounded in all quarters of the globe. The aim of Swami Vivekananda was nothing short of this. Hinduism means nothing but Vedanta and the living commentaries on Vedanta were Ramkrishna and Vivekananda. About the previous *avatars* some doubt is inevitable. The question is naturally raised as to how far they are historical and how far legendary but no such question can possibly arise over Ramkrishna and Vivekananda, for their disciples are still in our midst. *As Buddhism means the imitation of Buddha and Christianity means the imitation of Christ, so Hinduism is another name for the imitation of our rishis and avatars ;—and*



*because there cannot be any doubt whatever as to the historicity of Ramkrishna and Vivekananda, therefore it follows that the Hinduism of those drawing their inspiration from these great souls must be more living, vital and dynamic than the Hinduism of others. Like the past prophets and avatars of India they delivered the message of Vedanta once more at a very critical stage of our national life when Hinduism was fast declining. Whatever may be the sect of a Hindu—be he a dualist, qualified non-dualist or a non-dualist pure and simple—be he a Vaishnava, Shakta or Shaiva—it is on one of the commentaries of Vedanta that his sect is founded. In the teachings of Ramkrishna and Vivekananda we see that which we do not see anywhere else—I mean, the wonderful harmony of all the conflicting schools and sects; and yet it is not merely the religion of learning, the religion of theories but the religion of life, practice (Sadhana) and realisation (Siddhi). A man's Ishtam (object of worship) will not only remain unimpaired but he will be all the more devoted to his Ishtam for his reverence for Ramkrishna and Vivekananda and for contemplating his Ishtam in the light of their lives. It is not only the Hindus who will be better Hindus but Christians and Mussalmans also will be better Christians and better Moslems if they cherish reverence for Ramkrishna and Vivekananda. The lives and teachings of Ramkrishna and Vivekananda are the sure solvents of the intolerance associated with the Semitic group of religions, viz., Judaism, Christianity and Islam. All the religions of the world are bound to come under some school or other of Vedanta.*

As for the Hindu, he is very tolerant no doubt in matters of doctrines, dogmas and modes of worship, but as he is very narrow in social matters, his social ideas cannot but be liberalised if he once comes under the influence of Ramkrishna and Vivekananda. This is the true character of Hinduism and this alone can justly claim to be the Religion Universal. *Universal Religion has nothing to do with eclecticism and syncretism. It is the underlying principle of all the religions of the world. Hinduism, rightly understood, is not a religion among religions but religion itself—the absolute religion. The full manifestation of Hinduism in the present age we see in Ramkrishna and Vivekananda alone. To follow them is the same thing as to follow Universal Religion. Man pants for Man and it is through the God-Man that he ultimately arrives at*



the Truth. *This is the psychology of avatar-worship, prophet-worship and hero-worship.* It is not external worship merely that will suffice. External worship has its place but *what is needed above all is inward method and worship in spirit; or in other words, the most important thing is the formation of one's character after the example of the Hero, for the Hero is the ideal incarnate.* The genius of Hinduism or Universal Religion in the present age was manifested in the person of Ramkrishna Paramhansa. The champion of Hinduism in the present age was Swami Vivekananda, the ochre-clad generalissimo of his God-intoxicated Master. They have infused a new spirit into the dead bones of our religion and have made the much abused Hindu bold, strong and self-confident. What he wants now is that boldness and enthusiasm which was the marked feature of the early Buddhist, the early Christian and the early Moslem. It is not by the sword but by the power of the spirit that the Hindu seeks to conquer the world. It is the business of the Ramkrishna Mission to arouse the dormant spirit of the Hindu. It is the business of the Mission to remove the poverty of our soul. It is the business of the Mission to convince the Hindu that he is a veritable lion and not a bleating lamb. That he takes himself for a lamb is due to the obstruction caused by Maya. The veil of this Maya must be rent asunder with a ruthless hand. It is the business of the Mission to remove all the evils the Hindu is heir to. Economic evils, social evils, civic evils—in short, there is nothing that does not come within the scope of the Ramkrishna Mission; yet the method of the so-called social reformer and political agitator it wholly rejects. It is the aim of the Mission to train the Hindu in his national culture and make him a Hindu in the true sense of the term so that he may be strong, self-determining and have confidence in himself.

The fundamental principle of the Mission, however, is not political and social reform, though it knows very well that all the departments of life are inter-related and inter-dependent. The Mission goes to the root of the matter. If the nation wants to rise once more it must rise through the principle of Dharma. This was the conclusion reached by Swami Vivekananda, the founder of the Mission, with the deep insight of a *rishi*. It is not for nothing that he saw the vision of Awakened India



in his hours of meditation. The believers in Ramkrishna-Vivekananda must have faith in this vision and the Mission is strong in this faith.

What short-sighted social reformers and political agitators are doing in our country the man who runs may read. Now we hear so much about constructive work, village organisation and all that sort of thing. If success attend these endeavours none will be more gratified than we ; but because the underlying principle of all these activities is political, therefore it is very doubtful how they will all end. The aim of the Mission is different altogether. The foundation of true constructive work was laid by Swami Vivekananda about thirty years ago. The Mission is loyally treading in his steps, it is silently carrying the colours of its Master and is slowly but surely extending its operations. May God help the Mission to forge further ahead ! The slogan of the Mission is *Individual Reform* or what the Swamiji called his man-making work. Let individual character be first formed on the basis of Dharma and social, political and economic reforms must come themselves. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

The object of the Ramkrishna Mission is best represented by the symbol conceived by the genius of its founder as its characteristic mark and seal. It is the symbol of harmony—the harmony of Jnana, Bhakti, Karma and Yoga. What the Swamiji has called Practical Vedanta is boldly inscribed on the banner of the Mission. The Vedanta of the forest and the mountain-cave is to be brought to bear on our daily life. That is why a new order of monks has come into existence. For parallels we have to go back to the Buddhistic age of India and the history of Mediæval Europe. The immense benefit conferred on man by Buddha's *bhikshus* and the Catholic monks is known to every student of the world's civilisation. That philanthropy which is not based on renunciation inspired by spirituality but on the profit-and-loss philosophy of the utilitarian school is philanthropy without sense. It is purely mechanical, and as a machine is lifeless, no real good can be expected from it. Even the word "pity" has not been used by the founder of the Mission. His motto is Renunciation and Service—the service of Narayana in man. It is an ideal not to be



found in Buddhist India for the Buddhist ethics does not rise higher than the ethics of pity. Nor is it to be found in Medieval Europe for the Christianity of the Church never rose above dualism proper. The home of this ideal is India no doubt. The source of this ideal is India's Upanishads. But the ideal was never applied to life as it should have been. It is the large-hearted Swami who has done this for the first time in the history of Hindustan or for that matter, in the history of the world. No dedication, no true service is possible without absolute renunciation. That is why the helmsmen of the Mission are all Sannyasins. Their high philosophy of work may be beyond the comprehension of the majority of men. Still the noble example set by them is well calculated to inspire all to go forth and do likewise. It is through *nishkama karma* (work without the desire for external result) that purity of the heart will be attained and it is through the pure heart that *Jnana* (wisdom), *Bhakti* (devotion) and *Prema* (love) will shine forth in their glory and lead men ultimately to the goal of *Mukti* (liberation). However we may talk, we can but do good to ourselves by trying to do good to others. The real effect of all true work is nothing but internal. This thought will save us from vanity and make us heartily grateful to the poor, the ignorant, the heavy-laden and the weary, for God has given us an opportunity to serve Him by serving the needy since He is everywhere and He is all. We should always remember that it is *Narayana* who comes to us disguised as the forlorn and the helpless. How beautifully and feelingly has Swami Vivekananda expressed this idea in the well-known lines of his famous Bengali song! The English rendering is this:

From highest Brahman to the yonder worm,  
And to the very minutest atom,  
Everywhere is the same God, the All-Love ;  
Friend, offer mind, soul, body at their feet.  
These are His manifold forms before thee,  
Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God ?  
Who loves all beings, without distinction,  
He indeed is worshipping best his God.

(To be concluded)

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## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### Swami Shraddhananda

The death of Swami Shraddhananda—which we regret we could not notice in our last issue owing to unavoidable circumstances—in the afternoon of the 23rd December, at the hands, as alleged, of a Muhammadan fanatic has left a melancholy gap in the public life of India. The Swami at the time of his death was seventy-one years old and was still in his bed after a severe illness. The brutality of the murder could not be exceeded. The Swami was a strong and virile man, strong in all fields of his action. He was a great educational reformer, having the Kangri Gurukula to his everlasting credit. He was also one of the first organisers of the Shuddhi and Sangathan movements. And his love for his religion knew no bounds. He did much while living and his tragic death will, we are confident, achieve more. Those Muhammadan leaders who in their excessive communal zeal, have often observed reticence at acts of crime committed by members of their community when the victims were Hindus, cannot surely absolve themselves absolutely of the indirect responsibility of this murder. Their reticence has encouraged the mentality which lay behind this cruel assassination. We are convinced that until Hindus have united themselves into a compact body, filled with the true spirit of their religion and culture, Hindu-Moslem unity cannot be seriously thought of. Let us hope that the martyrdom of Swami Shraddhananda will accelerate the realisation of Hindu and Hindu-Moslem unity.

### The Indian National Congress

The most distinctive feature of the last session of the Indian National Congress at Gauhati in Assam was the able speech of the president, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, which was well-reasoned and lucid. We do not think that the Congress has really succeeded in finding a solution of the present tangle of the public life. The points that have interested us most in the presidential address are, firstly, the president's illuminating remarks on communalism which we quote here partly :

"No community can, in these days, really progress in secular affairs unless the nation as a whole advances, unless, in other words, the other communities either acquiesce in the rise of one community or make equal progress. The best way of advancing politically in one's own community is, therefore, to raise the status of all the communities as a whole. For, if you seek to advance your own community, all the other communities band themselves together against yours. Communalism is not so much a positive idea of benefiting one's own community as a destructive desire to obtain advantages at the expense of the other communities. And how, one may well ask, is a community benefited



by one of its members securing a post in Government service or succeeding in an election? If he conducts himself justly and honestly as a member of the public service, members of his community can share only in the general good and can gain no undue advantage. If, on the other hand, he favours them at the expense of others, he will become unjust and corrupt."

Secondly, his observations on the relations of politics and religion with which we find ourselves in complete agreement. He says rightly that "the intrusion into politics of religion, and very often of dogmatic religion, must be resisted as a primitive or mediæval idea,.....disastrous alike to religion and to politics." He gives a place to religion "far, far above Swaraj which is not comparable to them." But we are afraid, Mr. Iyengar has not properly thought of the implications of this assumption. If politics is dissociated from religion, politics will immediately lose its present importance. For religion is the central motive of every Indian life, whether Hindu or Muhammadan, and to it is devoted its best attention and energies. Religion necessarily is the primal concern of the collective life as well. That is why all our recent political movements have trailed in the end into sorts of religious cults. It is our opinion, therefore, that just as religion should be on the one hand purged of its credal aspects and fanaticism and made non-sectarian and fundamental, so also politics on the other hand must be relegated to its legitimate, subordinate position in the scheme of collective life. The latter can be best accomplished by separating the different collective functions - social, religious, economical, educational etc.—from the amorphous and hybrid body of our present politics. Then politics will be true politics and flourish better. Nationalism and politics are not identical. In India nationalism cannot but be predominantly religious. In seeking to identify politics with nationalism, by trying to organise the nation on the political basis, we are repeatedly creating religious conflict. A change in the angle of vision is the greatest want of the hour.

We would like to make a suggestion, though it does not fall quite within our scope. A good part of the present confusion, and waste of money and energy can be saved, we think, by the Congress formulating a fixed policy of its own. It may be said that in the constantly changing circumstances of the country, the Congress cannot have a fixed policy. But if the Congress is for the realisation of self-government in India, then surely its first duty is to formulate a scheme of self-government, a truly Indian constitution, in conformity with the history and genius of the Indian people. The Congress should therefore appoint a commission to that end, consisting of the best men available in India or abroad for that purpose. And when the constitution as framed by them will be approved by the country, the Congress can settle down to its realisation through all adequate means. And then much of the present unseemly party-quarrels will be mitigated; for it will not matter much what means the different parties adopted to realise the goal which was the same for all, so long



as they were honest. There will be greater catholicity and tolerance and confidence. We do not know whether this lay opinion of ours has any value in the expert eye.

### A. Great Bengali Vedantin

Little is generally known of the great monk and Vedantin, Madhusudana Saraswati, the renowned author of *Advaita-Siddhi*. The following short sketch, for which we are indebted to an article by Pralliad C. Divanji, M.A., J.L.M. in the last issue of *Annals of the Bhandarkar Institute*, will, we hope, be found interesting. The writer himself derives his information mainly from a Preface in Sanskrit written by Pandit Iswar Chandra to the *Harilīlā Vyākhyā*. Iswar Chandra's authority is an ancient Mss. named *Vaidikavāda Mīmāṃsā* found with an old Brahmin family of E. Bengal.

Madhusudana was one of the four sons of one Purandarāchārya, a direct descendant of Rāma Misra who had migrated from Kauauj and settled at Nadia. On the death of his father, Purandara was once invited by Mādhaba Pāsā, a Hindn king (?) of Vanga to his capital. On his way back, he saw the suburb of Kotalipada, settled at its hamlet named Usasuja, built a house which he named Purandara-Vātikā and a temple for the goddess Sri-Dakshināmurti Kālīkā, which are still said to exist. He had four sons named Srinātha, Yādavānanda, Madhusudana and Vāgishachandra. The last died at a very young age but the first three became famous later on as Srinātha Chudāmāni, Yādavānanda Nyāyāchārya and Madhusudana Saraswati. Madhusudana is considered to have flourished in the latter half of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century.

Once upon a time, the story runs, Purandara went with his two sons Yādava and Madhusudana to the court of Mādhaba Pāsā and showed to him how brilliant and learned the latter was and at the end of the interview expressed a desire for a grant of the land on which he had built his hermitage. The king, though struck with Madhusudana's ability, was not disposed to make the grant. This exasperated Madhusudana more than his father and so much filled him with a sense of remorse that he begged permission of his father to turn a recluse which the latter granted. He thereupon became a Dandī Sannyasin and proceeded to Benares.

Connected with the journey there is a legend current in that province that Madhusudana, finding on his way the river near Yasohara overflowed, camped on its bank and prayed to God Varuna to give him a passage through the river, and got an inspiration in a dream that he would not find any obstruction. On waking up he proceeded to cross the river on foot and did so without difficulty. The people therefore named the river after him.

At Benares, he got himself formally initiated into the *Brahmavidyā* by Vishweshwara Saraswati and soon became widely known in the learned circles there and began to be admired and respected on account of



his observance of strict penances and the practice of Yoga. It was there that he composed *Advaita-Siddhi*, his masterpiece on the Vedanta philosophy. It is said that the poet Tulasidâsa was his contemporary and lived at Benares. They having come to know each other, the latter sent his *Râma-Charita-Mânasa* for the former's perusal. Another legend that is current about him is that the Emperor Akbar having heard of his learning, once invited him for a discourse with the savants of his court and that they were so struck with his mastery over the Sanskrit language that they paid him very high encomium. He is believed to have gone to reside at Hardwar in the latter part of his life and passed into *Samâdhi* at the advanced age of 107 years.

## THE ESSENCE OF VEDANTA

### [VEDANTASARA]

(Continued from page 34)

अधिकारो तु विधिवत् अधीतवेदवेदाङ्गत्वेन आपाततः अधिगता-  
'खिलवेदार्थः अस्मिन् जन्मनि जन्मान्तरे वा काम्यनिषिद्धवर्जनपुरःसरं  
नित्य-नैमित्तिक-प्रायश्चित्तोपासनानुष्ठानेन निर्गतनिखिलकल्मषतया  
नितान्त-निर्मल-स्वान्तः साधन-चतुष्टयसम्पन्नः प्रमाता । ६

6. He is the only competent student<sup>1</sup> who, by studying in accordance with the prescribed<sup>2</sup> method the Vedas and the Vedangas<sup>3</sup> (the books auxiliary to the Vedas), has obtained a general<sup>4</sup> comprehension of the entire Vedas, who, being absolved from all sins in this or in a previous<sup>5</sup> birth by the avoidance of the actions known as *Kâmya* and those forbidden in the scriptures and by the performance of actions called *Nitya* (daily obligatory rites) and *Naimittika* (obligatory on special occasions) as well as by penance and devotion, has become entirely pure in mind, and who has adopted the four *Sâdhanas* or means for the attainment of spiritual knowledge.

[1 *Student*—It is connected with '*Pramâtâ*,' the last word of the text. By *Pramâtâ* is meant the man who is infallible in scriptural or worldly conduct. Or it may mean pure Consciousness as reflected in the mind. Or again, according to another commentator, it signifies the pupil of pure conduct of any of the three higher castes.

<sup>2</sup> *Prescribed method*—By practising *Brahmacharya* and other austerities of the student life.

<sup>3</sup> *Vedangas*—These are six in number :—(a) *Shikshâ* (The science



of proper articulation and pronunciation), (b) *Kalpah* (Rituals or ceremonies), (c) *Vyākaranam* (Grammar), (d) *Nirukta* (Etymological explanation of difficult Vedic words), (e) *Chhandas* (The science of prosody), (f) *Jyotisham* (Astronomy).

4 *General etc.*—Otherwise there will be no necessity for his further study of the scriptures.

5 *Previous etc.*—This is in explanation of the cases of Vidura and other sages who, though not endowed with scriptural knowledge etc., were yet said to have attained the highest realisation. These sages were born with purity and other requisites of realisation as a result of their studying scriptures etc. in a previous birth.]

### काम्यानि—स्वर्गादीष्टसाधनानि ज्योतिष्टोमादीनि । ७

7. The sacrifices such as *Jyotishtoma*<sup>1</sup> etc. which enable their performers to get the desired fruits such as living in heaven etc., are known as *Kamya*<sup>2</sup> Karma.

[1 *Jyotishtoma*—Comp. the scriptural passage, “ज्योतिष्टोमेन स्वर्गकामो यजेत” —“With a view to go to heaven perform the Jyotishtoma sacrifice.”

2 *Kamya etc.*—Those ceremonies which are performed with a definite motive are called *Kamya* Karma.]

### निषिद्धानि—नरकाद्यनिष्टसाधनानि ब्राह्मणहननादीनि । ८

8. Forbidden acts, such as slaying<sup>1</sup> the Brahmin etc., are those which bring about undesired results as going<sup>2</sup> to hell etc.

[1 *Slaying etc.*—Drinking and other vices are included.

2 *Going etc.*—Additional punishments include worldly afflictions etc.]

### नित्यानि—अकरणे प्रत्यवायसाधनानि सन्ध्यावन्दनादीनि । ९

9. Daily rites such as *Sandhya*<sup>1</sup> etc., the non-performance of which causes harm are called *Nitya* Karma.

[1 *Sandhya etc.*—The morning, noon and evening prayers of the people of the three higher castes.

*Pancha Mahāyajna* or the five daily obligatory sacrifices of a householder are also included.]

### नैमित्तिकानि—पुत्रजन्माद्यनुबन्धीनि जातेष्ट्यादीनि । १०

10. *Jāteshti*<sup>1</sup> sacrifices etc., which are performed subsequent to the birth of a son etc., are called the *Naimittika*<sup>2</sup> Karma or rites observed on special occasions.



[1 *Jāteshtā*—Comp. Tait. Samh. 2. 2. 5. 3. “वेदानरं द्वादशकपालं निवपेत् पुत्रे जाते ।”

2 *Naimittika* etc.—The rites whose performance are obligatory on a householder on special occasions.]

### प्रायश्चित्तानि—पापक्षय(मात्र)साधनानि चान्द्रायणादीनि । ११

11. The penances such as *Chāndrāyana*<sup>1</sup> etc., are rites which are instrumental in the expiation of sin.

[1 *Chāndrāyana* etc.—Regarding the four varieties of penances see Manu XI 217—220. The *Krichchhras* or other austerities are also included. Comp. Manu XI. 209—216.]

### उपासनानि—सगुणब्रह्मविषय(क)मानसव्यापाररूपाणि शान्तिव्यवस्थाविद्यादीनि । १२

12. The *Upāsanas* or devotions such as are described in the *Shāndilya Vidyā*<sup>1</sup> are mental<sup>2</sup> activities relating to the *Saguna*<sup>3</sup> Brahman.

[1 *Shāndilya* etc.—This is the famous chapter of the *Chhandogya* Upanishad beginning with “सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म”—“All this is verily Brahman etc.” (3. 14. 1). *Dahara Vidyā* etc. (Chh. Upa. 8. 1) are also included.

2 *Mental* etc.—as distinguished from real knowledge. The *Upasana* is distinct from *Jñānam* or Knowledge as in the latter case all differences between the meditator and the object of meditation are obliterated.

3 *Saguna* etc.—Brahman with attributes such as power of creation etc. The word *Saguna* is used to make a distinction between mental activities and complete absorption in the Highest Self in which case all ideas of the object are entirely effaced.]

(To be continued)

## HINDU PEACE AND CHRISTIAN POWER

BY JANE ALDEN.

(Continued from page 44)

“But,” said the missionary, “what about Nirvana and all that negative philosophy?”

“It was not the Buddha who made it negative. Doubtless he and the Christ, too, would be surprised at many of the doctrines of their ‘followers.’ The Buddha said: ‘Let him cultivate the good will without measure towards the whole world, above, below, around, unstinted, unmixed with any feeling of making distinctions or showing preferences. This state of heart is best in the world. It is Nirvana.’”



"And any one who thinks he preached a negative doctrine or a life of apathetic meditation should listen to this," I said, as I whipped out a little note-book I had been using for specially interesting quotations: "'A life of indolence is an abomination, and lack of energy is to be despised.....The teaching of the Buddha does not require men to go into homelessness or to resign the world.....but whatever men do, whether they remain in the world as artisans, merchants, and officers of the king, or retire from the world and devote themselves to a life of religion, let them put their whole heart into their task, let them be diligent and energetic.....and if they live in the world not a life of self but a life of truth—then surely joy, peace and bliss will reign in their minds.'"

Miss Shearer also had produced a note-book.

"Where did you find all that?"

"In Paul Carus's version of the gospel of Buddha. I wish that every Westerner would read it and that great Hindu classic, the *Bhagavad Gita*, or 'Song Celestial.' We pass ignorant generalizations from mouth to mouth about the 'negative philosophy' of the Indians—and what Occidental in a million has ever studied the Hindu scriptures?"

"He will do well if he studies his own!" The missionary returned to her guns. "Any one who really knows and follows the gospel of Christ—"

"But that's just the point: no one can really know and follow the gospel of Christ without following—whether he knows it or not—the gospel of these others. Every one of the great world-teachers taught the same thing. All taught that this same one Truth they preach *will* deliver. All taught the laying down of the life of the limited self. All emphasized the spirit and not the letter. All said, 'Be in the world, but not of it'—you have only to go through the several scriptures to be struck with the similarities on every page."

"Well, my dear," interrupted Miss Shearer, "the proof of the pudding is supposed to be in the living. If Indian religious teachings are so uplifting, how do you account for the misery and degradation among the Indian people?"

"Every one knows that India's great weakness is social exclusiveness, which grew out of keeping the highest knowledge in possession of the 'twice-born' castes and away from the masses. India, which is paying dearly for that exclusiveness today has waked up to that fact that she will never be anything until she repairs her fault and patiently educates those whom she has neglected."

"Ah!" said Miss Shearer triumphantly, "so you admit—"

"But on the other hand"—I looked into her face as into that of the whole western world—"our own great weakness is spiritual exclusiveness and arrogance and the assumption that our prophet and our doctrine alone can save mankind. As an Indian gentleman said to me yesterday, 'The Christians fondly believe that the Lord is their private discovery!' Don't you truly think that the Hindu idea of all the great religious teachers as saviors and divine incarnations is more beautiful and tolerant, and more really Christian, than ours?"



"There was but one divine incarnation!" flamed Miss Shearer. "Jesus Christ is the only son of God. We're told that in the Bible, over and over."

"And their Bible—the *Mahabharata*, which in its oldest form antedates the Christian era by several centuries—tells them, 'Whenever there is a decline of religion and virtue, and whenever there is an ascendancy of vice, I incarnate myself for the establishment of *Dharma*, of righteousness, and for the destruction of the wicked.' And again, 'Whatever path a man may choose according to his own inclination and inborn tendencies, I reveal myself through that path.' 'He the Lord is One, Truth is One,' says the *Rigveda*, 'but men call It by various names.'"

Which is the finer ideal—the bigger and more inspiring point of view? Shall we have one single manifestation of divine goodness, one single, inspired book, to guide us through human history, or shall we have all the divine men and the sacred books that our brothers of every time and clime have contributed to the rich storehouse of the ages? Is it to impress our will and our way on the world that the Christian Church exists? Or should it be to present our way, modestly among other ways, for men to choose of their own accord, if our lives make it seem irresistibly attractive?

Miss Shearer and the missionaries gave me up; and I went from the intense physical activity and intellectual narrowness of the missionary compound to the spiritual breadth and peace of the Hindu monastery.

This group of dignified terraced buildings on the Ganges, above Calcutta, was founded by the famous Swami Vivekananda, who became so well-known a figure at the Chicago Parliament of Religions. On the death of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna—a great Hindu saint of the last century—he rallied and held together the handful of young men who had been the sage's closest disciples. The little band lived for years in great poverty, in the ruins of an old garden near the place of their Master's cremation. But, though their bodies were frequently near starvation, their minds and spirits soared high—in the long days and nights of continuous prayer and meditation.

Such lives of devotion could not remain forever hidden in a garden. The monks went on pilgrimages and became known throughout for their character and learning. Their combination of the orthodox Vedic principles with a broader-than-orthodox application of these in the solving of Indian social problems won the best elements in all grades of Hindu society. Then came the enthusiastic reception of Swami Vivekananda in America and the subsequent impetus to the consolidation of the work at home. Today the Order of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda numbers some three hundred of the most intelligent and best trained men in India, with hundreds of others constantly applying for admission. From the head monastery at Calcutta, they have established branch monasteries, hospitals, dispensaries, schools, orphanages, and now women's religious houses also, throughout the length and breadth of the country. Their influence, since they are working in harmony



with India's own cultural tradition, is probably greater than that of any other modern Hindu religious movement. They have taken as their motto *Stva-Sheva*—"God and Service." Thus to the old ideal of the Indian monk as an isolated wanderer,\* absorbed in contemplation of the Divine, they have added the ideal of worshipping God in acts of service to man. Much of their time is spent in nursing, caring for and educating the poor. In this Order there is of course no caste, and the highest Brahman serves the lowliest beggar, often going specially to the great *melas*, popular festivals and other gatherings where fever and disease are prevalent, in order to perform this service. The night I arrived at the monastery, a band of some half-dozen of the younger monks and novices had just returned from such an expedition.

The next day two of them set forth on pilgrimage, one to the Himalaya and the other to a great shrine in the South. For months they would be plunged in the silence of their own "withdrawn" communion with the Universal Spirit that they had also been serving in their pariahs at the mela. Not only are they no whit behind the missionaries with the pariah, but they are gradually bringing other Hindus to their broader conception. In their wise alternation between the life of action and the life of contemplation—making the one feed the other—they seem to me to go beyond our western idea of purely social service with no nourishing inspiration from periods of quiet withdrawal.

Meanwhile in the guest-house on the Ganges, the English lady and I began our studies. The Hindus believe that for each of us there is a natural temperamental path of approach to Truth. Hence the first thing a Hindu teacher does, is to find out what his pupil's natural path is. At first this waiting attitude was a bit disconcerting to us, used as we were to the western preacher-debater's dynamic plunge into the midst of things. Our lessons were given, not in a seminary lecture-room or a crowded corner of a busy minister's office, but under a tree in the garden, by the broad-flowing Ganges; and instead of the western ministerial "live wire" there was our venerable *Swami*, coming down the path from the monastery gate, in his yellow robe and peaked cap, with a rose in his hand for each of us!

He would settle himself in a corner under the big *bantan*, where the village children came shyly to "take the dust" from the holy man's feet, and the cows, like spoiled children also, muzzled into his arm for the bits of fresh green he never failed to have for them. Other animals wandered about peacefully; over on one side of the garden the young dispensary swami served his patients—villagers in their green shawls and blue-and-orange mantles, picturesque groups against the white plaster house; farther on the *sadhus* came and went about the tasks of the day—gardening, drying grains, culling flowers, preparing rice for the poor. Great barges of golden hay drifted past us down the river to the musical chanting and rhythmic bending of the

\* The old ideal of Sannyasa was not mere self-isolation and wandering, but also the preaching of the spiritual truths—Editor, P. B.



lithe brown bodies of the rowers. And in the midst of all this tranquil life we sat with our swami under the big tree.

With Hindus it is always individual teaching; so we came one by one and took our seats beside him. He spread his shawl for us over the hard knobs, smiled upon us and said nothing. In consequence we did just what was expected of us: opened the over-crammed closets of our minds and hearts and let the whole *mélange* of mixed thoughts and worries and ideas roll out before him. Like all modern Westerners we were full of "problems." All my first questions were about social and economic conditions in my country.

He listened. I am sure he had never heard such a mental uproar.

"Is there *nothing* one can do?" I asked finally.

"Yes, there is something. You can forget, forget your country, forget all these troubles and perplexities and work on yourself."

"But isn't that selfish?"

"No. It is never selfish to seek the higher self, to seek wisdom. For, when you have found it, it will be for all. And until you have found it, what can you contribute that is worth anything? All this running about in an attempt to settle this and that external problem is like so much repairing of the roof in one corner while a fresh leak is breaking out in another."

"Then we are not to try to help the world at all?"

He shook his head with gentle obstinacy. "The only way to help the world, to purify society, is to purify the individual. You Westerners have the unshakable conviction that some day all the evil of the world will be disposed of by reforms and philanthropic organizations and that then will come the millennium. But we Hindus say that logically no such thing can happen. For what is this world, all this appearance, or *maya* as we call it, but the playground of two forces—attraction and repulsion, or, in ethical language, good and evil? How can you have life without these two? No—this world is simply a grand moral gymnasium, in which souls may gain strength and insight through various tests and experiences—and so ultimately God-realization and liberation. We believe in progressive unfoldment, from lower to higher states of consciousness—from the lowest animal to the highest god—and in the action and reaction, the sowing and reaping, incident upon successive phases of development.

"But," he continued, "Hindu philosophy says that you cannot be lugged into paradise on the shoulders of some one else's suffering. You must struggle, and never cease struggle, in order to attain the consciousness of that supreme life—knowledge—bliss that is our idea of heaven—happiness. For to us God is not a person, favourable to some and unfavourable to others—who have not been lucky enough to hear about him through one special religious system that he approves of. He is Immanent Spirit, pervading every atom of this universe, nearer than the near, the very breath and life and heart of every being. And by quieting restless thoughts and drawing in the scattered senses from those outer objects that divert us, we may gradually purify and clear



the mind till we do behold the Lord himself—not far off, not separate from ourselves, but here and now, shining effulgent within us!”

Such peace and beauty had come into the strong old face that I was moved to say, “You have known that experience—of God-realization—yourself?”

“It is the joy and dayspring of my life! And you too will know it,” he assured me with quiet conviction. “Every soul in the universe will finally know it—as surely as there is within every soul the principle of expansion, intelligence, growth, that will not stop until the very outermost limit has been reached. But our system for accelerating this process of soul-expansion we call *Yoga*; and, when a person has found that particular *Yoga*-path that is the right path for him, he can go much faster.

“You have doubtless heard a lot of pseudo-oriental nonsense about this *Yoga*,” he went on, “from clever charlatans seeking to exploit their psychic powers. But in reality there is nothing mysterious or ‘occult’ about it. *Yoga* is a straightforward science, with certain specific rules, which, if faithfully followed, produce certain specific results. A man may be an atheist, and, if he follows the rules, he will arrive at the same results as the most ardent devotee. There is a *Yoga* for every temperament and every station in life: for the man of action in the thick of the world; for the man of emotion, who needs images and symbols and ceremonies to help him realize; for the experimental man, of scientific and agnostic tendency; for the philosophic and analytic man, who likes to reason and come to the end by sheer force of logic.

“This last *Yoga*, *Jnana-Yoga*, is, I think, your natural path of development,” he added. “And I want you to go to Benares and have instruction from a much more learned swami there, who can explain to you the subtleties of the Hindu philosophy—our theory of involution and evolution, *Karma*, reincarnation and the great corner-stone of ethics and the Hindu social system, *dharma*. We are not seeking converts or church-members! Let a thousand Ramakrishna-Vivekananda organizations come and go. Try to realize the highest Truth; practise it in any way you can, through any form of work or worship that is natural to you. Allegiance to the principle is all we ask of you.”

“That is very different from the idea held by the Christian missionaries!”

“God bless them,” he said gently; “they are following their conviction. To us it seems odd that the West claims itself as a ‘Christian’ civilization, with a ‘Christian’ church. Christ was an oriental ascetic, preaching the doctrines of non-resistance, renunciation, taking no care for the morrow.

“Excuse me,” he apologized; “I am speaking of your countrymen. But I am not unappreciative of the real gifts of the Christian missionaries nor of their very real service—of education and social betterment—to India. They came and waked us Hindus to a tardy sense of our own duty. We were too introspective, too unsocial;



we carried our spiritual preoccupation to an extreme. There is much that we would gladly learn from the missionaries—we, the educated classes, as well as our pariahs. But will the day ever come when missionaries will go to a country and ask its people to tell them how to be of help? If missionaries did that, all India will be converted to Christianity overnight! We are about the only practising Christians in the world, anyhow," he added, with a mischievous twinkle.

I laughed with him. "But aren't all the cock-sureness and superiority of the West just signs of extreme youth?" I suggested.

"Surely—surely," said the swami serenely. "For nations as for individuals there are two great rhythmic twin aspects of life: appropriation—renunciation. As we say, *pravritti dharma*, *nivritti dharma*—the path to power and the path to peace. And men must go through the one before they are ready for, or can understand, the other. What meaning has renunciation for your peasant immigrant or for our pariah? First acquire and enjoy, know power, the Hindu scriptures teach, and then and then only will you know the nothingness of power and be ready, nay eager, to renounce it. So these two systems, the oriental and the occidental, are exactly fitted to deal with the two complementary phases of human experience. We should value them for what they are instead of decrying. And now we go to the temple—gongs are sounding for vespers."

Just to enter that temple at the monastery was to be blessed. One put the shoes from off one's feet, spiritually as well as physically, and came in hushed, to take one's place among the motionless figures of the Brothers—each seated in fine aloofness upon his own prayer-mat on the white marble floor.

In the inner temple, beyond the dusk of the outer room, was the altar, a glowing jewel—pale flowers, archaic gold, the priest with his waving lights and gongs and conchs. And then of a sudden, unexpectedly, from those statuesque silent figures—the sonorous burst of a great chant, like a Gregorian plain-song. It gathered volume and power as each additional phrase increased its ardor. The room was charged with the passion of devotion and aspiration that swept from the exultant stanzas.

Silence then the more complete for this tremendous outburst of song. The lights are dimmed, the priest withdraws and the worshiper is left alone with his own meditation. Some of the Brothers go out; others remain, shrouding themselves in their draperies, like marble figures in their remote immobility.

Then—I never knew how long we stayed there, sometimes for minutes, sometimes for hours—each, as the spirit moved him, made his salutation, took his prayer-mat, put on his shoes and went out again into the world of duties.

For the Brothers, back to the monastery and their evening studies. For us, back to the guest-house under the stars. The Turner magic



of the now misty gray river—points of flame here and there through its gossamer curtain. Supper, quiet talk on the veranda, and sleep—to the songs of boatmen and the minor sweetness of a flute afar off.\*

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna falls this year on Saturday, the 5th March. Public celebrations will come off on either next day or on the 13th March. We shall be glad to receive reports of celebrations.

### Kumbha Mela at Brindaban,—an Appeal

Sri Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram, Brindaban sends out its appeal for contributions in cash or kind in order that it may discharge its self-imposed duties of properly serving the diseased. The Sevashram has at present provision for thirteen indoor patients. It specially requires 13 mosquito nets, 13 quilts and 13 warm coats or sweaters, instruments for saline injection, Allopathic and Homeopathic medicines for pneumonia and cholera and at least Rs. 1,000 for diet etc. The requirements want to be fulfilled immediately in view of the coming Kumbha Mela at Brindaban. It is hoped that the readers of the Prabuddha Bharata are aware of the ensuing Kumbha Mela at Haridwar. It is the custom of the Vaishnavas however to assemble at Brindaban during the month of Magha (January-February) and spend the whole month on the sands of the Jumna, before leaving for Haridwar. It is expected that this year also there will be a large assemblage of them; and there will therefore be many cases of illness which the Sevashram will have to attend to. Will our kind readers and their friends come forward with unstinted help? All contributions may be sent to "Swami Girijananda, Secy., Sri Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram, Brindaban, Muttra."

### Another Ashrama at Malabar

Swami Nirmalananda, president of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Bangalore, opened another centre of the Ramakrishna Order on the 10th Dec. last, in South Malabar at a short distance from the Ottapalam railway station. The Ashrama has been named the Niranjana Ashrama after a prominent disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Niranjanananda. It is situated on a beautiful site on the river Bhârata. The site was

\* From ASIA, New York.



a free gift of a Nambudiri Brahman family. On the opening day, devotees and Sannyasins from the other centres of Malabar assembled at the new Ashrama. There was *pūja* and *bhājana* and distribution of *prasada*. In the evening Swami Nirmalananda discoursed to all present on the Divinity of man and the problems confronting the modern world, on the part which Indians, and especially Hindus, have to play therein, and on the necessity of everyone becoming a hero by calling out the latest Divinity within and the futility of trying short-cuts and the urgent need of patient and hard work. May the Ashrama be a source of ever increasing good to mankind!

### At the Ananda-Ashrama, California

With Swami Paramananda's return from Boston on July 30th, summer activities commenced at the Ananda-Ashrama. Classes were held under the trees, all sitting on the grass around the Swami. At eight in the morning when the whole Ashrama sparkles with new life and everything is fresh and fragrant, the Swami held the morning meditation. At noon, tasks were laid aside, whether of the desk or of the field, and the workers were again brought into contact with the inner source of things through the Swami's interpretation of the teachings of the Buddha as contained in the "Dhammapada." At four in the afternoon the Swami spoke on the "Bhagavad-Gita." Business men and women who came to spend their vacation at the Ashrama were profoundly affected by the spirit and power of this school and went back to their work refreshed and restored.

On August 22nd, the Swami spoke for the Pasadena Forum at a meeting held in Library Park, Pasadena, at an early hour in the morning.

The Liberal Catholic Church of St. Albans in Hollywood, where Swami spoke three years ago, again claimed him for its Vesper Service of August 29th. A large congregation was present and deep interest shown in the Swami's address which had as its theme, "Yoga and Mysticism." He also spoke at La Cuyada's new Community Church, on Sunday morning, September 10th, on "Harmony of Life." In addition to these activities, the Swami has been giving a series of lectures on Friday evenings during August and September, at the Divine Science Church at Los Angeles, and during the month of September has spoken on Wednesday evenings in Alhambra at the home of two old students.

On October 25th the Swami left California for Boston after three months spent at the Ananda-Ashrama. During these months and before, the work of the Boston Centre has been ably carried by Sister Satya-Prana and Miss Philadelphus who conducted the classes and the services. September saw the termination of the Swami's lecture courses in cities near by the Ananda-Ashrama, so that the month of October was devoted almost exclusively to the Ashrama. The great religious festival, Durga Pūja, which lasts for three days, was celebrated by the members of the Ashrama household even as it is in India.



After the Swami's departure all services and classes at the Ashrama were conducted by Swami Akhilananda.

### **R. K. Mission Sevashram and the Kumbha Mela at Hardwar**

We beg to announce to the public that the "Purna Kumbha Mela" will come off at Hardwar in March-April next after a lapse of twelve years. The Mission Sevashram will then have to strain every nerve to alleviate the sufferings of the sick, helpless pilgrims, both high and low, in all possible ways. In order to meet the exigency properly and successfully, pre-arrangement is imperatively necessary. The Sevashram's work will comprise the following items :

(i) Permanent Hospital Relief Section.—This will contain 1 Doctor, 2 Compounders, 1 Dresser and several Nurses. They will be in charge of the Permanent Hospital, both indoor and outdoor, except the Cholera Section.

(ii) Temporary Relief Section.—This section will have 1 Doctor, 1 Compounder and 2 Nurses, who will go round every day from camp to camp to find out patients who are unable to come to the Sevashram, and treat them there. They will also inform the Headquarters, if they find any case requiring to be removed to the Hospital.

(iii) Special Cholera Relief Section.—This department will consist of several groups of volunteers. (a) One party of the volunteers will be in charge of the nursing department of cholera patients in a Special Ward, throughout day and night. (b) The duty of another batch of workers will be to bring in cholera patients on Ambulance Cars and to cremate the dead ones. (c) And the third party will contain 4 workers who will disinfect the places from where cholera patients will be brought.

(iv) Kitchen Section.—The workers of this section will take charge of the Kitchen and Stores Department and prepare food for the patients, workers and guests.

But to carry out the plan successfully, about Rs. 10,000 will be required at the lowest estimate. The Sevashram hopes that this help will be readily forthcoming from the charitable public. Contributions, in cash or kind, may be sent to (1) Swami Kalyanananda, Hony. Secy., R. K. Mission Sevashram, P. O. Kankhal, Dt. Saharanpur, U. P.; or (2) The Manager, Uddodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta; or (3) The President, R. K. Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal.



# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्त्य वरान्निधीयत ।

*Katha Upa. I, III. 14.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES

*10th March, 1921 (continued)*

The Swami said :

"Sri Ramakrishna used to say that one is fitted for Sannyasa by having become a king in a previous birth. Then only is one imbued with true dispassion from the very beginning of life. One has not otherwise all his desires satisfied. Is Sannyasa a mere form? Our idea was that a Sannyasin is very rare. For no ordinary man is he whom Maya has released from her bondage. When I saw three thousand monks at Hrishikesh, then did I truly feel the difference between a true and a merely formal monk. A mere ochre garb does not constitute Sannyasa.

"They want early Sannyasa in order to evade working. Our Master did not emphasise Sannyasa so much as realising God. But it is true he was emphatic that knowledge of God is not possible without renunciation. 'You must procure fire from outside in order to light your own' — this is what he said."

Some one here put in : "But Swamiji strongly emphasised the necessity of Sannyasa."



To which the Swami replied: "Yes, he did. But he also initiated the institution of service. You must take him in toto. But that you do not do. Some there are who refuse to work. They want, to use the Master's words, to have the 'butter' put into their mouth, they will not churn it out themselves. Everything must be given them ready-made! That is why initiation into Sannyasa does not conduce to progress.

"Unless we dedicate ourselves to the service of others, we can do little good to them. Infinite sympathy and patience are needed. A bad health is a great impediment, it often causes mental irritation.

"Was not Swamiji *sattvika*, of a calm and dispassionate mind? Who was ever so *sattvika* as he? My impression of him is not derived from hearsay, but from constant companionship and ocular evidence. I have seen him sitting at meditation at nine in the evening, quite insensible to the bitter stings of swarms of mosquitos, and rising from it at five in the morning to take an early bath. It seemed as if Shiva himself was meditating, so deeply absorbed and unconscious of the external he would be! Self-control and balance,—these are characteristics of *sattva guna*. Swamiji saw that India cannot redeem herself unless she passes previously through *rajas* or activity. That is why he preached the doctrine of selfless work which is *rajas* or activity inspired and controlled by *sattva* or mental poise and dispassion.

"How hard a teacher has to labour to be able to help the pupil ever so little! He must bring himself down to the level of the pupil and take him up by the hand step by step.

"Swamiji once severely castigated one at Meerut, who could not help but yet criticised. When we came upon him at Bombay about to embark for Chicago, he said: 'I find my power of sympathy has grown considerably, I feel keenly for others.' It was there that on seeing placards in which a certain disciple's lecture on his master whom he looked upon as a Divine Incarnation was announced with the disciple's name printed in big letters and his master's in small, Swamiji asked: 'What do you think of this kind of preaching?' I found nothing special about it. Swamiji replied: 'Do you believe this kind of preaching is any good? Do you note the difference in the letters? One must preach by one's life and character so that others may know therefrom that one's teacher must have



been a Divine Incarnation to be able to build up such a life and character.' And in fact Swamiji preached exactly in this way. He never preached Sri Ramakrishna as an Avatara. The one lecture he delivered on him was at New York on the eve of his departure for England. While I lived with him in America, I had occasions to attend some of his lectures. I enquired of some of the audience how they found the lectures. They praised them very highly. When I mentioned this to Swamiji, he said: 'Do I merely *lecture*? I give them something solid,—I do it consciously and they also feel it.' Indeed mere lectures can accomplish nothing.

"The slightest thought of self tarnishes a good work and makes it inane. It does not confer Immortality. Even the possession of the entire earth does not satisfy. Man seeks to conquer celestial regions by performing sacrifices. But then Indra obstructs him for fear of losing his dominion. The Paramahamsas, the sages, however, acquire Divine powers even in this life. The Lord's associates at Vaikuntha have all the same appearance as the Lord, only they do not wear the Divine jewel *Kaustubha*."

Here someone enquired whether what the Swami just then said was only an allegory or a literal truth. The Swami replied: "Why not a literal truth? It is quite possible that the higher thought world also has its formal counterpart. As you think so you become. The Master said: 'A piece of lead thrown into a pool of mercury becomes mercury. Even so by thinking of the Lord, one becomes like Him.' Thought condenses into form.

"There is no change in the Atman. It is eternally the same. All changes are in the Prakriti. It eventually becomes purer and purer. You may purify Prakriti even in this life.

"India has made vast progress in psychology, for that has been her special study. The West has done wonders in the study of the material world, and is creating new varieties of animals and plants. What miracles have not Burbank done! . . . They would analyse the soil of a land, find out what crops can best grow there and produce accordingly. But knowing that consciousness can never be derived from matter, the Hindus considered the material world as less important and devoted their best attention to the inner world and eventually discovered the secrets of the Atman.



"The two are existing side by side,—heaven and hell, God and the world. Withdraw the mind from the one and it goes to the other. Draw it away from the world, it goes at once to God and *vice versa*. For, there is only one substance after all. That does not mean that there is no distinction between *dharma* and *adharma*, virtue and vice. The Master said that whatever takes us towards God is *dharma* and whatever takes us away from Him is *adharma*."

## THE WAY OUT

BY THE EDITOR

The world is an eternal mixture of good and evil as they are the obverse and reverse of the same thing. Evil is a chronic disease of the world. But what is alarming is that it has become acute in these days. Individualism has been running rampant during the last few decades to such an extent that it is beyond control now. It is vitiating family life, society, nations and races.

The family has been in all countries and ages the natural sphere for achieving the moral development of man. The love of the family prestige and respect for the ancestors have always been strong influences in regulating virtue and moral life and making social life healthy. The happiness of a family depends on the mutual adjustment of its members, which is in itself a training in self-sacrifice. In these days of political and industrial upheavals and colonisation, and the economic independence of women, family life has become extremely difficult on account of their destructive influences. Further, the conversion of the marriage vow to a mere contract to all intents and purposes, and its possible annulment have also a disintegrating influence on the family life ; and we have consequently a loss of family virtues and their ennobling influence on men.

In society, money-earning is occupying a most important place in man's life. The greatest interest of the age seems to be in the accumulation of wealth. It leaves us no time for refinement and culture. All the functions of life seem to be subordinated to this one concern and we have become so accustomed to it that we do not see its abnormality. But it has



begun to undermine the social basis. We have been neglecting the very object for which it is worth while acquiring wealth, namely, the spread of culture and happiness among men.

It is sometimes supported by a philosophy. It is said that every man in pursuing his personal interest furthers the good of all, for the progress of the collective whole is the sum-total of the progress of the individuals. "It is therefore the duty of everyone to be reckless in pursuit of his own interest and virtue must have a separate field for its working apart from business." The social result of such a philosophy has been to create a break between material prosperity and morality in the life of man. He has two contradictory ideals set before him. What is condemnable in private is honourable in business. What is condemned in the individual is justified in the nation and even applauded.

So long as a man is individualistic in outlook, he will take advantage over others and make them work for himself. He will take advantage of the laws of the land, and his competitors will find themselves helpless before him. He amasses immense wealth which creates a wide gulf between him and others, and this gives him further power to trample on all laws and morality, and even to force the Government to carry out his wishes. The labourers are completely at his mercy. This is more or less the present condition of the world. The capitalists have another great advantage in the increase of population which has made living dear and forces the labourer to take up work on insufficient wages. We have thus ever increasing wealth on the one hand and progressive enslavement on the other. This has degraded the rich who care for nothing except their money and their enjoyment.

This has produced a spirit of revenge in the labourers and they are trying to repay them in the same coin. They have organised themselves into trade unions and guilds etc. Their method of coercion is "strike", but this is not always successful. For the Government often backs the capitalists in the name of public interest and breaks and crushes it. Thus the poor are scarcely able to make any headway against the enormous influence exercised by the rich. This often fills them with hatred; and being full of vigour and revenge, they may eventually upset the whole social order and civilisation together with whatever is good, bad or indifferent in it.



The beneficence of present-day industrialism has been naturally challenged in the name of justice and morality. And as a result we have socialism, etc., whose aim is a morally perfect state in which government and law shall be unnecessary and also personal struggle for existence. It is considered that all attention to the production of wealth with no attention to its equal distribution is the cause of all trouble, and socialism etc. consequently uphold the demand of the masses for a larger share in the management and use of the commonwealth and its funds. In short, they want to raise man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom. Even the most unselfish among the capitalists see in the plan of the socialists an attack on property and a control on acquisition, which they consider detrimental to society, interested as they are in its present conditions. Socialists are therefore looked upon as driving business to bankruptcy and creating class-consciousness and social warfare. The doctrine of evolution is also put forward by them as necessitating competition for a healthy growth of life ; for progress has been, according to them, "connected with the natural law which renders selection necessary, keeping up stress and competition by compelling every type to tend to overrun the conditions of existence for the time being." Socialism however is gaining ground and is destined to be successful. But a socialism of the mob would be more dangerous to civilisation. The only way out seems to lie in the bridging of the gulf that has been created between the higher classes and the common people.

In the collective life, individualism has revived the old tribal insolence under a new garb called nationalism which has once more given prominence to the idea of "might is right". Patriotism may be commendable, but nationalism or the right of every nation to manage its own affairs regardless of any other and without moral considerations, cannot be tolerated. Still worse is the other doctrine that to every nation its own life and power to work its will (be it moral or immoral) are more important than abstract ideas of truth and justice. So long as such ideas prevail, nations cannot but come into clash with one another and peace can only be a dream.

Individualism is working havoc also as racial hatred, the whites hating the coloured races. The disappearance of coloured races wherever the whites have occupied their lands, is ex-



plained by the theory of evolution ; for in the struggle for existence natives must go or work as labourers to the whites who are superior to them ! They think that no amount of humanitarianism can arrest the cause of nature's inexorable laws.

Civilisation declines when individualism replaces communalism in the life of a people, when it creates distinctions in the society, which go on widening till at last points of common feeling and sympathy disappear. It shuts itself from the outside world, being guided by the same spirit of individualism, instead of that broad principle of communalism to which it owes its progress and achievements. Individualism has been developed to the extreme in the modern age, and civilisation is in danger of destruction ; and unless unifying ideals prevail, a set-back to human progress is inevitable.

Progress of civilisation and social well-being lie in the subordination of the selfish to the unselfish, of the material to the spiritual. Competition and struggle do not ultimately work for progress. The laws of evolution—struggle for existence and survival of the fittest—do not seem applicable to the affairs of men. There the motive force is more self-sacrifice than self-aggrandisement. Struggle with man is within himself, in controlling and subduing the lower mind, and thus manifesting the Atman through education and culture. The evil that is in us cannot be got rid of by killing others but by spiritual upliftment. Unless the inherent selfishness of man is restricted by *dharma* or righteousness, desires controlled by conscience, the production and distribution of wealth equitably done, social stability is unthinkable. Without righteousness or *dharma* the so-called progress would only work the ruin of society. The life of a nation must be governed by a high moral ideal to which all the national powers must be subordinated. The higher the ideal, the more cultured the society. It is idle to say that it is not practicable. Every nation must have a complete theory of life, and all its activities must be regulated in relation to that theory. In fixing its ideal a nation cannot safely ignore the ideal of renunciation ; for without it life is incomplete. This non-recognition of the ideal of renunciation is the greatest defect of the modern world. Without renunciation which alone brings it home to us that true happiness lies in virtue and self-restraint



rather than in enjoyment, there is little hope of our redemption. The ideal of *brahmacharya*, of the celibate life, must be placed before the world. The proper control of the senses alone can put an end to all individual and national struggle.

A due proportion between the population and the resources of a country should be maintained in order to avoid the necessity of plundering and occupying the lands of other peoples. The present earth-grabbing tendencies can be cured only by religion, by a life of self-control. In order that the population may not go beyond the resources, the ancient seers of India held before the people a high ideal of married life and of celibacy in earlier and later life. Thus did they try to avoid over-population and all its ugly consequences.

The life of Sri Ramakrishna, an ideal for the age in more respects than one, upholds the ancient ideal of a perfect married life. A monk of monks and perfect in renunciation and self-control, he was yet married. That was evidently to demonstrate before people the highest ideal of married life, to show that instead of satisfying one's senses, a pure and high purpose should be fulfilled in married life. He lived with his wife, gave her secular and religious training and had the highest respect for her ; but he had no carnal relations with her. He showed what the highest ideal of a wedded life should be. By trying to follow him men and women will be blessed and prove a blessing to society, struggle and competition will be reduced by preventing over-population, and talented children will be born endowed with great qualities and the false glamour of romance, obscuring the solitary grandeur and freedom of the soul as the ultimate aim in the name of an all-absorbing companionship, will be utterly destroyed.

In the extreme type of the renunciation of money found in Sri Ramakrishna who could not even bear the touch of a coin or a metal pot, we find the potent antidote to the modern greed of gold. To his strong attachment for truth which was so great that never an untruth dropped from his mouth even in fun, the modern world of hypocrisy, dishonesty and diplomacy stands in deep contrast. It is only the truthfulness, sincerity of purpose and child-like faith as found in Sri Ramakrishna that can give peace to the world.



The greatest ideal however that he holds to the modern world is that of inclusive toleration. He is the greatest harmoniser of human civilisations and institutions. He has found something of value in the conflicting views of life and religion and has pointed out to us that all religions and systems of thought are good so long as they by their special forms are capable of giving men a lift to the higher states of self-realisation, and that as such they are complementary to each other and none is superior to the others. This message comes from the depths of his own spiritual realisations. He had realised that Oneness everywhere which is the goal of Advaita Vedanta. This highest truth of Vedanta is infinitely catholic, for it says, "Do not disturb the faith of any, even of those who through ignorance are attached to lower forms of worship ; help every one till you include all humanity." It teaches a God which is the sum-total of all religious ideals ; and therefore it alone can be the universal religion and put an end to all fanaticism and narrow-mindedness. It recognises that growth is gradual and so it harmonises and regards all the preceding systems as steps to the highest. Moreover it has this merit that it is the most rational of all religious theories and the world needs such a religion at present. It teaches the divinity of man, that man is potentially divine and that the difference between man and man is one of degree and not of kind. This revolutionises our outlook upon man. It gives hope even to the worst criminal.

The spirit of service which Sri Ramakrishna has brought into the world through his life and teachings is unique. Two things have to be combined to usher in a new era,—a world-kindling spiritual enthusiasm and a social upheaval in the form of a passionate desire to sacrifice one's all in the service of the masses. These will sweep away the barriers that now divide mankind and set up a perfection in human fellowship. These are exactly what we have in the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. All men—good and bad, the greatest and the least—are one in the Atman. For the same divinity is in all in spite of external differences. To serve the Lord as manifested in his children is the greatest privilege we can have. No more privileges, but equal chances for all. Variety there shall be, for sameness is impossible in the phenomenal world. But because of that the more favourably placed should not tyrannise over others.



So in the life of Sri Ramakrishna we have a message for the modern world of strife and competition. It is a message of harmony which while recognising differences among men and nations as regards their natural aptitudes, creeds and faiths, renders possible for mankind in various grades of development to live in peace and amity by organising themselves into an interdependent universal family, each nation contributing its quota to the progress of man and civilisation. Human perfection can be reached only through the evolution of the varied qualities of the different races and nations. Each man or nation can manifest only a particular aspect of the infinite glory of the Atman. So destruction of weaker peoples through exploitation or fanaticism means a great loss to human progress. It is an ideal of service, faith in man, universal harmony, and love and tender concern for the frailties of man due to incomplete growth that Sri Ramakrishna holds up to the world. Will it accept the ideal and refresh its weary soul?

## RUDRADHYAYA

By SWAMI KAMALESWARANANDA

The Rudrādhyāya, or the chapter about the God Rudra, is the sixteenth chapter in the White Yajur Veda. In this chapter the three main subjects dealt with in the Vedas, namely, Work, Worship and Knowledge, are so clearly and harmoniously treated that the student, who is anxious to learn the fundamental principles of Vedic teaching, cannot do better than give his attention to it. From the study of this chapter he will also realise how firmly based in the Vedic Scriptures is that synthesis of Devotion and Knowledge which is characteristic of the teaching of the Ramakrishna Mission.

Like the rest of the Yajur Veda the chapter is in "unfettered words," i.e. prose, but it contains also many verses from the Rig Veda in various kinds of Vedic versification. The whole chapter recurs with variations in the Krishna Yajur Veda.

The promotion of Vedic studies was one of the objects most dear to the heart of Swami Vivekananda. When he was living at the Belur Math after his return from the West, he took pains



to collect copies of the Sañhitas and Brahmanas for the Math library and arranged for their systematic study under competent teachers. Into this, as into all his undertakings, he poured all the energies of his soul. On being asked by Swami Premananda (of holy memory) about the value of the Vedas, he spoke for about two hours, declaring that through the study of the Vedas we could reach our goal of a true and universal religion. He often insisted that the Holy Vedas should be adopted as "our only Scripture," and the rules he framed for the Ramakrishna Math are based on the same principle. But Swamiji was carried away by the hand of an inscrutable providence and it is left for us to realise his dream of a revival of Vedic learning.

The chapter under consideration deals with Rudra and Rudra means Giver of Knowledge.

The knowledge he gives is that of God as the All-pervading Spirit. We read in the Sruti—**सत् सद्गुण तदेवानुप्राणितम् ।**

The ordinary man, distracted by the things of this world, fails to realise God's indwelling presence in every object of the universe. Only the happy few, and they only after hard spiritual struggles, succeed in so tranquillising the waves of the mind that they attain a glimpse of the Life Eternal, and so find satisfaction and peace. God is seen by them to be the Great and Eternal Good, the Hope and Light of the World, the Source of all Energy, the First and Last Reality, the Beginning and End of all that is, was or shall be. Those who have so seen God will proclaim their discovery to the world.

All this, they will say, is the Lord.

All this is the Great.

All this is the Soul.

All this is the Universal Spirit.

All this is Brahman.

Whatever is, is He.

He is all that is.

Devotion to this Indwelling God is the keynote of the Rudradhyaya. Every line from the 17th mantra to the 47th repeats the refrain—**Namah, namah: Bow to Him, bow to Him**—as though the writer could not insist too often on the necessity of humility before God. The same teaching is found in the Atharva Veda, **II. I. 6.**



I bow to Thee in the morning,  
 I bow to Thee at night,  
 I bow to Thee by day.  
 Again in the Rig Veda we read  
 The best is bowing.....It holds together the Earth  
 ...and the Sky.....  
 By it our sins are destroyed.

Again in Bhagavad Gita 9. 34 Krishna instructs Arjuna in similar terms—

Me should you worship,  
 Me should you salute,  
 And Me shall you have.

Such adoration is the highest form of worship. It is the basis of all true self-surrender and consequently the only pathway into the presence of God.

From a literary point of view the chapter has much to commend it. The language is often strikingly beautiful. The sage seems to stand on the shore of a boundless ocean, absorbed in prayer.

To Thee, O Lord, I bow  
 who art beyond the seas,  
 who art on this side of the sea,  
 who art in the sailing vessels,  
 who art in the depths of the sea,  
 who art on the borders of the coast-lands,  
 who art in the foaming waves,  
 who art in the sands of the shore,  
 who art in the waters at the river's mouth,  
 who art in the little pebbles,  
 who art in the calm expanse.

O Deity of matted locks, I bow to Thee  
 who art in the barren soil where there is not  
 a blade of grass.

And yet again I bow to Thee  
 who art in the flowing watercourses.

From a philosophical stand-point the chapter is equally acceptable to the Theist (Dvaitavadin or Bhakta) and the Monist (Advaitavadin or Jnanin). The Theist recognises the distinction between the worshipper and the object of worship. He sees in God his Ideal, the embodiment of all that is good, and he hails this God, not only as the Lord of his own heart, but



also as the Indwelling Spirit of the whole universe. He traces the touch of this Spirit in the whole order of nature. With such a philosophical background to his religion he finds the devotional spirit of the Rudradhyaya entirely to his taste.

The Monist in the same way finds here nothing with which to quarrel. He holds that nothing exists apart from Brahman. All the apparent objects of the phenomenal world are only superimposed on Brahman by Ignorance. The only real existence is the Eternal "Chit" (Pure Consciousness) which is also Being (Sat) and Bliss (Ananda). This ultimate Reality is never differentiated nor transformed into anything other than itself. The Sruti may indeed (out of deference to the weakness of human intelligence) speak of it as so differentiated with a view to arousing the soul from the stupor of Ignorance, but in fact "Sat-Chit-Ananda" remains one, free, unattached and all-inclusive. Accordingly the Rudradhyaya does not hesitate to include in its address of adoration even that which is evil.

Salutation to Cheats and Impostors.

Salutation to the Chiefs of Thieves and Robbers.

Nothing must be excluded from God.

O Benevolent One, I bow to Thee,  
Thou art the Carpenter and the Chariot-builder,  
Thou art the Hunter and the Fowler  
and the Chaser of animals with dogs.

So the great Swami Vivekananda used to speak of God not only as the great and powerful, but also as the weak and despised. "The poor Narayana," he used to say, "the illiterate Narayana, the Chandāla Narayana."

The great Sri Ramakrishna has left us a most valuable illustration of this important doctrine. He lived almost perpetually immersed in Universal Consciousness, and even on the rare occasions when he returned to ordinary levels, he never forgot that the objects of the phenomenal world are only manifestations of the One Universal Substance (Chit). He is reported to have said, "Do you know what I see around me? All these things are the same Rama with masks on." These simple words contain a profound philosophical truth. A mask may be horrible, calculated to strike terror into the hearts of children, or it may be ridiculous and throw them into fits of laughter.



Yet the wearer of the mask is neither horrible nor ridiculous. So the one unconditioned, undifferentiated Chit appears through the mask of Maya as all the various objects of the visible world, and gives to one man joy and to another sorrow.

It is important to notice that our chapter is full of that spirit of Bhakti (or loving devotion) which is characteristic of theistic religions. It has been affirmed that Bhakti is not found in the Vedas but only appears in the Mahabharata and the Gita and the Puranas. It is true that the word Bhakti occurs only in the Svetasvatara Upanishad in the phrase *यस्य देवे परा भक्तिः*, but the idea is one of the common-places of Vedic literature. In the chapter we are studying it is particularly prominent.

One feature of Bhakti religion is its faith in a Personal God. In this chapter Rudra is unmistakably personal. He has two arms, an image, a visible appearance. We find the poet singing—

“Your body is of scarlet colour  
And your throat is blue.”  
and again

“Place your trident and other weapons on a high tree,  
Come to us in your tiger skin bearing only your bow.”  
(Mantras 47 and 51)

Another feature of religion of this type is prayer and again the Rudradhyaya is rich in such gems as this—

O Fulfiller of all wishes,  
Shower your blessings on our children  
and our descendants.

O Rudra,  
Save these men and beasts from all diseases,  
and dispel their fear.

O Rudra,  
Blessed be our children and our relatives,  
Blessed be our cattle and domestic animals,  
Let our neighbours flourish and our dwelling villages  
be secure.

One more prayer, which we offer as our heart's greeting to the great Lord of all, may fitly conclude this paper.

I bow to Him,  
from whom flows the highest good and emancipation.



I bow to Him,  
who confers on us earthly prosperity,  
who holds in his hands things good both for this world  
and the next,  
who is the personification of the Good  
who into that same Good converts his worshippers.

## THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSAL RELIGION

BY P. M. BHAMBHANI

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The advance in knowledge made by mankind by now has resulted in a universal acceptance of the principle that humanity is the same everywhere. By their needs and aspirations, by the means and activities which they employ in satisfying them, by the equivalent proverbs, maxims and adages which are in vogue among the peoples of various climes, by their beliefs and superstitions, by the common principles which form the basis of their various customs and manners and modes of worship and above all by the fact that men of different communities and nationalities speaking different languages understand each other through the medium of language,—by these and many other facts this truth is amply illustrated.

Now all these things bear relation to life and its manifestations. True that some of these can be called its accidents ; but inasmuch as they are universal and have existed ever since man was born they may be called its necessary adjuncts and can only provisionally be regarded as accidents until further knowledge confirms them as essential. To all ends and purposes, therefore, we may regard them as essential to life and maintain without much reservation that life and its laws are essentially the same for all mankind.

But religion is a need of life and cannot but be the same for all men whatever may be the human needs which it may satisfy. As it would be curious and even absurd if there were anything like a Hindu Chemistry, a Mahomedan Physics, a Christian Biology or a Zoroastrian Geology, so it appears curious that there should be different kinds of religion and that each man should be called upon to seek satisfaction of his religious needs of salvation in his own religion *i.e.* the religion in which he is born. Religious needs being the same for all men, the religion to satisfy these needs must also be the same. True that there may be different modes or forms of worship or ways of satisfying the religious needs ; but this could not change the essential character of religion and make religion different for different people, as the different modes of preparation of food could not make the laws of hunger and its satisfaction different for different people, or as the different ways of curing disease, which based on different theories are characterised as different sciences of medicine, could not make the laws of health and of curing disease different for different people. And



if this be so, as sciences never quarrel among themselves, so must the religions never quarrel; religion must not be a field for vain bickerings, jealousies and heart-burnings and the most inhuman persecutions as it has been up to this time. And as different theories in Science or Philosophy in pursuance of the fact that truth is one after all, admit, by means of the process of rejections and selections, of being reconciled and ultimately running into one body of truth, so also do the various beliefs and different modes or forms of worship in religion admit of being reconciled and of ultimately running into one body of religious truth, and assuming the name "The One, True, Universal Religion for All Mankind."

All the various modes of worship go by the name "Religion", even the most atheistical ones. But an identity of name must imply an identity of meaning. What could therefore be the meaning of the common name "Religion"? Martineau would consider the belief in a supernatural being called God as a part of the connotation of religion. To him such a belief is essential to its conception. But this view seems to be erroneous. The definition of religion must be such as to embrace all the particular religions of the world in the past, present and future. Any definition which fails to fit in with a religion of the future must be modified, unless a system of belief going by the name is not a religion at all. We must therefore find the differentia of "Religion", or an attribute or a set of attributes which essentially characterise, and are common to, all the religions and base our definition on them so that even a new religion springing up in the future may be included in it. In short the definition must be an ideal one.

Now if we examine the various beliefs, superstitions, religious ceremonies, the modes of worship and the various ways in which the religious beliefs influence the social customs of different peoples, the *raison d'être* of the phenomenon called religion will be apparent. Why is it that any religion exists at all? I have said above that religion would be nothing if it had no relation to life, if it were not based on life and its needs. An analysis of human needs must therefore bring out very clearly what we want. These may be divided into

- (1) Physical needs;
- (2) Intellectual needs;
- (3) Emotional needs;
- (4) Moral needs;
- (5) Æsthetic needs;
- (6) The need for the continuity of life beyond the grave.

Having these needs man knows that they cannot be easily satisfied, that there are various forces which govern their satisfaction positively and negatively, and that in their negative exercise they form hindrances instead of helps to their satisfaction. Man finds that in the performance of their latter function they are more formidable. The natural forces administering disease and producing phenomena like the earthquake and the volcanic eruption and creating animals dangerous to life like the wolf, the tiger, the snake etc., appear to him greatly terrifying. Again the social forces appear to him even more active in this respect. He finds that interests clash, one man's needs in their search after satisfaction cross



another man's needs, that this leads to crime and even to war and bloodshed, that men in power try to trample over the rights of the weaker ones and to secure their gains whenever they think they can do so with impunity. Man is found perpetually at war with his fellow-man, and warring individuals, societies and nations are in sight. Both of these aspects—positive and negative—evoke in him a double desire: a desire to subjugate the natural forces and a desire to organise the social forces and to persuade them to do no wrong. The two desires create a need for harmony between man and man, and man and nature and hence give rise to a need for knowledge. The mind in its search after knowledge finds all men possessing the same nature and the same needs and wonders why at all should one man try to satisfy his needs by defeating the same of another. Man is a reason-seeking animal. He possesses reason and wants therefore to find a reason for all phenomena which happen before his eye or otherwise within his knowledge. He traces the above conflict to a want of realisation of the fact that all men are essentially one and that they should for this reason learn to observe the principle of 'LIVE AND LET LIVE'. A thirst for harmony between all men and other members of creation begins and the birth of religion takes place. I should therefore define religion as the method of seeking and finding harmony between all creation.

Nor is this principle of harmony far to seek. It can be seen from the affinity which exists between the various departments of nature, from the fact of the relation of dependence between the body and the mind, from the fact that each department of nature depends upon the others for its existence. It can be seen, that is to say, from the very nature of the universe wherein it lies, finding its fullest development and realisation in men. The cravings of the flesh make it a bit dormant or he would find his kith and kin in the growing trees and distant stars, in animals, in men and in whatever other objects of creation there may be. The universe is one organised and harmonious whole, and could not stand in its integrity were it not for the fact that it is so characterised.

This principle of harmony is a principle of fellowship between all members of creation and especially between all men irrespective of their caste, creed or nationality. It is not only a logical principle which can merely be thought but the highest ethical principle which can be realised in action. It is the greatest spiritualising agency for the realisation of the moral law. It is a principle which inspires us with awe, with reverence, with obedience, with homage—and satisfies all the cravings and emotions which characterise religion. God then could be none other than this principle of harmony, this unity between the members of creation and foremost of all between all men. If this be the meaning of "God", assuredly all religions have God in them, as all without exception have in them this oneness of aim to achieve the kind of harmony spoken of above. In this sense even the most atheistic of religions become theistic and Martineau's definition of religion instead of being erroneous becomes true. All other conceptions of God have failed as mankind have failed to achieve the desired unity and harmony through these conceptions and through modes of worship based on them. As a result also of such a



failure some religions have given up altogether the search after God as futile and have been driven to the denial of his existence and to a construction of systems which they call religious, but for which they dispense with the need of the avowal or hypothesis of a supernatural being. From the stand-point of these religions, therefore, the definition of religion based upon a belief in the supernatural, would be too narrow, and would declare our proposal of a universal religion as a Godless one; but the new conception of God changes the whole situation and the view-point; and surcharges all religions with a newer and fresher theism practicable and realisable if only men's minds were made up.

The universal religion points out an objectively existing principle of harmony between all men and other members of creation and enjoins on each man separately a sincere and devoted search after it (the principle of harmony). It aims at the fostering of the understanding and knowledge of the nature of this harmony and at its realisation which on account of their ignorance mankind have greatly missed. It judges most of the variations among men as accidental. It points out that caste, creed, class, money, power, position or station in life, place and time of birth are mere accidents and while they may help as means to the realisation of the essential, they are not in themselves the essential. The feeling of pride or pomp amounting to the hatred of others and disregard of their rights is out of place, and not only betrays a sad ignorance of the essential and the universal or the God present in us all, but keeps us miles apart from the ideal of harmony or oneness which is the root and basis of all particular religions. Buddhism tried to bring out this universal in the form of its injunctions but neglected or rejected God instead of pointing out that the principle of harmony which was the object of its search was itself the God of which man was in search ever since he was born. There is a religious society in India which also does the same thing. It points out the ideal and marks it out as the highest object worthy of our attainment, but does not point out that the basis of this ideal lies in the actual or objective presence of the universal and the essential or the principle of harmony in all members of creation. Comte preached his religion of humanity but failed to point out the presence of this universal and absolute in the midst of its vast multiplicity or variation or the presence of this all-pervading principle of unity in the midst of the immense plurality. But whether separate religions speak of this universality or not, they all participate in the possession of this common aim and ideal, namely, the realisation of this harmony among all members of its creation. The existence of the principle of harmony and the aim to realise it in the shape of the universal harmony gives a common basis to all particular religions; and eliminating the different crudities, narrownesses, fibs and fictions into which most of them have been involved but which are purely accidental to them and are no part of their essence, bids fair to bring them into a harmonious unity of the One, True and Universal Religion as an object of acceptance by all men irrespective of place or community to which they belong.

Nor does this solution base our new religion on fear. Some forms of religion are based on fear, say for example, the religion prevailing



among the snake-worshipping people. But this new religion is actuated by the desire for the satisfaction of human needs and is supported on the omnipresent or the all-pervading principle of harmony. It is new not in the possession of this aim but only in the discovery of the common basis of religions. The principle of harmony which is present in all members of creation will be a guiding light or pilot towards the working out of the consummation or realisation of this ideal.

If it be said that a principle could not be worshipped, the answer is that it is principle alone that can be worshipped. A principle alone can be absolute and free from any charge of relativity and that we worship persons only when they are supposed to be embodiments of principles. A religion of principles alone, says Vivekananda, could be acceptable by all men. We want a God who is a God of principles. An embodied God is divested of its body as soon as men's minds develop a capacity to concentrate themselves on principles. The worship of principles is the only true worship, the only unchanging and impartial worship—worship that has no undue leaning on any side. While an embodied God may be prayed to by persons or parties of conflicting interests, to a God of principles such a prayer could not be sent at all. For then the contradiction is soon found out and killed; reconciliation takes place and friendship and harmony are the result.

The universal religion fights shy of all prejudices. It discards all slavery of thought and champions the cause of freedom in this respect. It is humane and just and is no respecter of private idiosyncrasies. It gives no commands. Persuasion, brotherhood and love are its creed. Nor could prejudice and partiality be the ingredients of the particular religious systems. They would be intrinsically inconsistent if they included these in themselves. Such disagreeable elements in a religion could be only a personal equation of the founders themselves and no part of the system they preached. Moreover prejudice or permission to persecute or make a religious war implies self-contradiction on the part of the leaders. Under the shade of the universal religion, truth is not jeopardised, nor is goodness compromised. Under its influence the evil of caste must go; the arrogance of class can exist no more; the institution of war must close; the varieties of station in life must be regarded as due to the necessary vocational differences and so occupying each its place in the economy of nature; the avenue to perpetual peace and progress opens out; and we usher in the era of peace and good-will unto all mankind.\*

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# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY NAGENDRANATH GUPTA

Nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed since Swami Vivekananda went to his rest, and every year that passes is bringing fresh recognition of his greatness and widening the circle of appreciation. But the generation that knew him in life and heard his voice is also passing with the years. Such of his contemporaries as are left owe it to his memory and to their countrymen to place on record their impressions of one who, by universal assent, was one of the greatest Indians as well as one of the world's great men. There is no need to repeat the story of his life, for that has been well and fully done by his disciples in the four volumes compiled by them, but one who knew him as I did may endeavour to strike a personal and reminiscent note, and to recall, so far as memory may serve, some small details of large significance, and the traits of character and the bearing that distinguished him from the people around him. I knew him when he was an unknown and ordinary lad for I was at college with him and I knew him when he returned from America in the full blaze of fame and glory. He stayed with me for several days and told me without reserve everything that had happened in the years that we had lost sight of each other. Finally, I met him at the monastery at Belur near Calcutta shortly before his death. In whatever relates to him I shall speak of what I heard from himself and not from others.

The conditions in India were very peculiar when Swami Vivekananda first attracted public attention. The imposition of a foreign domination and the grafting of a foreign culture had produced a pernicious effect on Indian life and Indian thought. The ancient ideals were either forgotten or obscured by the meretricious glamour of western materialism. There was an air of unreality about most of the progressive movements in India. In every field of activity a sort of smug unctuousness had replaced the single-minded earnestness and devotion of the ancient times. The old moorings of steadfast purpose had been slipped and everything was adrift and at the mercy of every wind and wave from outside India. The ancient Aryan had realized that there could be no achievement without sacrifice and self-surrender. The modern Indian in his new environment fancied that surrender was not necessary for attainment. Following the example of the West the Indian reformer did his work while living in comfort and ease. The method followed was that of the dilettante, touching the surface of great problems, but seldom attempting to probe deeper. Men with an eloquent tongue and the gift of persuasive speech stirred the emotions and feelings of their hearers, but the effect was more or less fleeting.



because of the lack of strength in the appeals. The conditions in India might be described as a flux if there were any assurance of a return of the tide. Perhaps there was no conscious self-deception but people were deceived and mistook the sham for the reality. The placid self-complacency noticeable everywhere was an unmistakable sign of growing weakness and inability to resist the inroads of habits of thought and ideals of life destructive of everything that is enduring, everything that is real in the long established order of things in India.

In the midst of these depressing surroundings was the quiet and scarcely noticed emergence of Ramkrishna Paramhansa after a period of preparation and meditation unknown to the people about him. He was practically an unlettered man like some of the great prophets of old, and by occupation he was the priest of a temple, a vocation for which he became unfit later on. Ignorant people thought his mind was giving way, but in reality it was a struggle of the spirit seeking true knowledge and finding its expression. And when this was attained he no longer avoided men, and drew round him a small band of earnest young men who sought for guidance from him and endeavoured to follow his teachings. Many of his sayings have been collected and published, but these give only a faint indication of his individuality. It may be said with absolute truth that he was one of the elect who appear at long intervals in the world for some great purpose. It has been my privilege to hear him speak and I felt then as I feel now that it is only rarely that men have the great good fortune of listening to such a man. The Paramhansa's language was Bengali of a homely kind; he was not supple of speech as he spoke with a slight though delightful stammer, but his words held men enthralled by the wealth of spiritual experience, the inexhaustible store of simile and metaphor, the unequalled powers of observation, the bright and subtle humour, the wonderful catholicity of sympathy and the ceaseless flow of wisdom.

Among the young lads and men attracted by the magnetic personality of the Paramhansa was Narendra Nath Datta, afterwards known as Swami Vivekananda. There was nothing to distinguish him from the other young men who used to visit Ramkrishna Paramhansa. He was an average student with no promise of brilliance, because he was not destined to win any prize of the learned or unlearned professions, but the Master early picked him out from the rest and predicted a great future for him. "He is a thousand-petalled lotus," said the Paramhansa, meaning that the lad was one of those who come fully equipped into the world for a great purpose and to be a leader of men. The reference was to the spiritual sphere since the Paramhansa took no account of worldly success. Ramkrishna Paramhansa could not only read faces with unerring accuracy but he had also extraordinary psychic power, which was demonstrated in the case of Vivekananda himself. That young man was not very regular in his visits to the Paramhansa. On one occasion he was absent for



several weeks. The Paramhansa made repeated enquiries about him and ultimately charged one of Vivekananda's friends to bring him. It may be mentioned that the Paramhansa lived in the temple of Dakshineswar, some miles to the north of Calcutta. The Paramhansa added that when Narendra came he wished to see him alone. Accordingly, there was no one else in the room when Narendra came to see the Paramhansa. As soon as the boy entered the room the Paramhansa left his seat and saying, "Why have you been staying away when I wanted to see you?" approached the lad and tapped him lightly on the chest with a finger. On the instant—these are Vivekananda's own words—the lad saw a flash of dazzling light and felt himself swept off his feet, and he cried out in alarm, "What are you doing to me? I have parents." The Paramhansa patted him on the back and soothed him, saying "There, there, that will do."

Shortly after this incident Vivekananda became an accepted disciple of Ramkrishna Paramhansa. The number of these disciples was very small and the Paramhansa was very careful in choosing them. Every one of these disciples was subjected to a constant and unrelaxing discipline more than Spartan in its severity. There was no spoon-feeding and coddling. The Paramhansa's prediction about Vivekananda was not communicated to any publicity bureau, and he and his fellow-disciples were always under the vigilant eyes of the Master. Vows, *vratas* of great hardship, were imposed upon the disciples and the discipline was maintained unbroken even after the passing of the Paramhansa. Vivekananda went to Benares, and it was there that he acquired the correct enunciation and the sonorous chanting of the hymns and the mantras which he recited very impressively at times in a deep musical voice. I have heard him singing in a fine tenor voice at the request of friends and as an orator there were both power and music in his voice.

Ramkrishna Paramhansa frequently passed into a trance or *Samadhi*. The exciting cause was invariably some spiritual experience or some new spiritual perception. On one occasion—it was in 1881—I formed one of a party that had gone with Keshub Chunder Sen by river to see the Paramhansa. He was brought on board our steamer, which belonged to Maharaja Nripendra Narayan Bhup of Kuch Behar, Keshub's son-in-law. The Paramhansa as is well known was a worshipper of the goddess Kali, but he was also an adept in the contemplation of Brahman, the formless, *Nirakara*, and had some previous conversation with Keshub on this subject. He was sitting close to Keshub facing him, and the conversation was practically a monologue, for either Keshub or some one else would put a brief question and, in answer, the Paramhansa with his marvellous gift of speech and illustration would hold his hearers entranced. All of us there hung breathless upon his words. And gradually the conversation came round to *Nirakara* (formless) Brahman, when the Paramhansa, after repeating the word *Nirakara* two or three times to himself, passed into a state of *Samadhi*. Except the rigidity of the body there was no quivering



of the muscles or nerves, no abrupt or convulsive movement of any kind. The fingers of the two hands as they lay in his lap were slightly curled. But a most wonderful change had come over the face. The lips were slightly parted as if in a smile, with the gleam of the white teeth in between. The eyes were half closed with the balls and pupils partly visible, and over the whole countenance was an ineffable expression of the holiest and most ecstatic beatitude. We watched him in respectful silence for some minutes after which Trailokya Nath Sanyal, known as the singing apostle in Keshub Chunder Sen's sect, sang a hymn to the accompaniment of music, and the Paramhansa slowly opened his eyes, looked inquiringly around him for a few seconds and then resumed the conversation. No reference was made either by him or any one else to his trance.

On another occasion the Paramhansa wanted to see the Zoological Gardens of Calcutta. His eagerness was like a child's and would not brook any delay. There were times when his ways were strongly reminiscent of the saying in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* that the *mukta*, the emancipated and the wise, is to be known by his childlike playfulness. A cab was sent for and the Paramhansa accompanied by some disciples was driven the long distance from Dakshineswar to Alipur. When he entered the gardens the people with him began showing him the various animals and aquatic collections but he would not even look at them. "Take me to see the lion," he insisted. Standing in front of the lion's cage he mused, "This is the Mother's mount"—the goddess Kali in the form of Durga or Parvati is represented as riding a lion—and straightway passed into *Samadhi*. He would have fallen but for the supporting arms around him. On regaining consciousness he was invited to stroll round the gardens and see the rest of the collection. "I have seen the king of the animals. What else is there to see?" replied the Paramhansa. And he went back to the waiting carriage and drove home. There seems to be an obvious incongruity between the predisposing causes of *Samadhi* on these two occasions. On the first, it was the contemplation of the *Nirakara* Brahman, a high and abstruse spiritual concept ; on the second, it was merely the sight of a caged lion. But in both instances the process of the concentration of the mind and the spirit is the same. In one, it is the intense realisation of the supreme Brahman without form ; in the other, it is a realization in the spirit of a visual symbolism inseparably associated with the goddess Kali. In both cases a single spiritual thought occupies the mind to the exclusion of everything else, obliterates the sense of the objective world and leads to *Samadhi*. No photograph taken of the Paramhansa in *Samadhi* ever succeeded in reproducing the inward glow, the expression of divine ecstasy, Brahmananda, stamped on the countenance.

As a young enthusiast passing through a probation of discipline Vivekananda desired that he should have the experience of continuous



*Samadhi.* The Paramhansa explained to him that this was unlikely as he had to do important work in the cause of religion. But Vivekananda would not be dissuaded and once while sitting in meditation he fell into *Samadhi*. The Paramhansa, when apprised of it said, "Let him enjoy it for a time." Vivekananda realized afterwards that the Master was right, and the time came when in fulfilment of the prophecy of the Master he held aloft the torch of Truth in distant lands and proclaimed that the light of knowledge comes from the East.

Under the vow of poverty and mendicancy Vivekananda travelled widely in northern and southern India for eight years, and his experiences, as may be imagined, were varied. He spent a great deal of his time in the Madras Presidency and he had first-hand knowledge of the evil influence of professional *sadhus*. He knew intimately the village life of the Telugu and Tamil-speaking peoples and he found his earliest admirers in the Madras Presidency. He was in Behar when there was great excitement in that Province on account of the marking of mango trees with lumps of mud mixed with vermillion and seed grain. In a number of districts in Behar numerous mango topes were discovered marked in this fashion. The trustees of an empire as the Government in this country somewhat theatrically call themselves may have a lofty function but they have an uneasy conscience, and the official mind was filled with forebodings of some impending grave peril. The wonderful secret police got busy at once, and it was shrewdly surmised that the marks on the mango trees bore a family resemblance to the mysterious *chupatis* which were circulated immediately before the outbreak of the Mutiny. The villagers, frightened out of their wits by the sudden incursion of armed and unarmed, but not the less terrible on that account, authority in their midst denied all knowledge of the authorship of these sinister marks. Suspicion next rested upon the itinerant *Sadhus* wandering all over the country and they were arrested wholesale for some time though they had to be let off for want of evidence, and the recent facilities of Regulations and Ordinances did not then exist. It was found out afterwards that the marking of mango trees was merely by way of an agricultural mascot for a good mango or general crops. Vivekananda had to get up early in the morning and to trudge along the grand trunk road or some village path until some one offered him some food, or the heat of the sun compelled him to rest under a roadside tree. One morning as he was tramping along as usual he heard a shout behind him calling upon him to halt. He turned round and saw a mounted police officer, bearded and in full panoply, swinging a switch and followed by some policemen. As he came up he inquired in the well known gentle voice affected by Indian policemen who Vivekananda was. "As you see, Khan Sahab," replied Vivekananda, "I am a *Sadhu*." "All *Sadhus* are budmashes," sententiously growled the Sub-Inspector of Police. As policemen in India are known never to tell an untruth such an obvious fact could not be disputed. "You come



along with me and I shall see that you are put in jail," boomed the police officer. "For how long?" softly asked Vivekananda. "Oh, it may be for a fortnight, or even a month." Vivekananda went nearer him and in an ingratiating and appealing voice said, "Khan Saheb, only for a month? Can you not put me away for six months, or at least three or four months?" The police officer stared and his face fell. "Why do you wish to stay in jail longer than a month?" he asked suspiciously. Vivekananda replied in a confidential tone, "Life in the jail is much better than this. The work there is not hard compared with this wearisome tramp from morning till night. My daily food is uncertain and I have often to starve. In the jail I shall have two square meals a day. I shall look upon you as my benefactor if you lock me up for several months." As he listened a look of disappointment and disgust appeared on the Khan Saheb's face and he abruptly ordered Vivekananda to go away.

The second encounter with the police took place in Calcutta itself. Vivekananda with some of his fellow-disciples was living in a suburb of Calcutta quietly pursuing his studies and rendering such small social service as came his way. One day he met a police officer who was a friend of Vivekananda's family. He was a Superintendent of Police in the Criminal Investigation Department, and had received a title and decoration for his services. He greeted Vivekananda cordially and invited him to dinner for the same evening. There were some other visitors when Vivekananda arrived. At length they left but there were no signs of dinner. Instead, the host spoke about other matters until suddenly lowering his voice and assuming a menacing look he said, "Come, now, you had better make a clean breast of it and tell me the truth. You know you cannot fool me with your stories for I know your game. You and your gang pretend to be religious men, but I have positive information that you are conspiring against the Government." "What do you mean?" asked Vivekananda, amazed and indignant, "What conspiracies are you speaking of, and what have we to do with them?" "That is what I want to know," coolly replied the police officer. "I am convinced it is some nefarious plot and you are the ring-leader. Out with the whole truth and then I shall arrange that you are made an approver." "If you know everything, why don't you come and arrest us and search our house?" said Vivekananda, and rising he quietly closed the door. Now, Vivekananda was an athletic young man of a powerful build while the police officer was a puny, wizened creature. Turning round upon him Vivekananda said, "You have called me to your house on a false pretext and have made a false accusation against me and my companions. That is your profession. I, on the other hand, have been taught not to resent an insult. If I had been a criminal and a conspirator there would be nothing to prevent me from wringing your neck before you could call out for help. As it is I leave you in peace." And Vivekananda opened the



door and went out, leaving the redoubtable police officer speechless with ill-concealed fright. Neither Vivekananda nor his companions were ever again molested by this man.

(To be continued)

## THE ESSENCE OF VEDANTA

[ VEDANTASARA ]

एतेषां नित्यादोनां बुद्धिशुद्धिः परं प्रयोजनम्, उपासनानां तु चित्तैकाग्र्यम्, “तमेतमात्मानं वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेन” इत्यादिश्रुतेः (वृः उः ४।४।२२), “तपसा कल्मषं हन्ति” इत्यादि स्मृतेश्च (मनु १२।१०४)। १३

13. Of these, *Nitya* and other<sup>1</sup> works serve the necessary<sup>2</sup> purpose of purifying the *Buddhi*<sup>3</sup>; but<sup>4</sup> the *Upāsana* chiefly aims at the concentration<sup>5</sup> of the *Chitta*, as in such Shruti passages, “Brahmanas seek to know this Self by the study of the Vedas, by sacrifice<sup>6</sup>” (Brih. Upa. 4. 4. 22) etc.; as well as<sup>7</sup> in such Smriti passages, “They destroy sins by practising austerities” (Manu 12. 104).

[1 Other works—The *Naimittika* and *Prāyashchitta* works are included. Comp. Smriti, नित्यनैमित्तिकेरेव कुर्वाणो दुस्तिक्तयम्—“Destroying sins by the performance of the *Nitya* and the *Naimittika* works.” Comp. Gita 16. 45, “स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः” The *Apastamba Dharmashastra* says, “Men of several castes and orders, each devoted to his respective duties, reap the fruits of their actions after death—and then by the residual Karma attain to births in superior countries, castes and families, possessed of comparatively superior Dharma, span of life, learning, conduct, wealth, happiness and intelligence.”

<sup>2</sup> Necessary—The word *param* in the text does not mean “principal,” otherwise the Shruti passage that follows would be meaningless. The purification of intellect is only the secondary means, the chief one being the eagerness for knowledge. The *Nitya* and other works are generally performed with three aims in view, viz., (1) the acquisition of wealth or knowledge (not the highest), (2) the purification of heart, (3) surrendering the result to the Lord. In any case the purification of heart is an inevitable effect. The following beautiful passage from the *Natshkarmya-Siddhi* (1. 52) shows how the performance of the *Nitya* Karma leads by successive stages to the attainment of the



highest knowledge : नित्यकर्मानुष्ठानात् धर्मोत्पत्तिः, धर्मोत्पत्तेः पापहानिः, ततः चित्तशुद्धिः, ततः संसारयायात्म्यावबोधः, ततः वैराग्यं, ततः मुमुक्षुत्वम्, ततः तदुपायपर्यवर्णः, ततः सर्वकर्मसंन्यासः, ततः योगाभ्यासः, ततः चित्तस्य प्रत्यक्षप्रवृत्ता, ततः तत्त्वमस्यादिवाक्यार्थपरिज्ञानं, ततः अविद्योच्छेदः, ततः स्वात्मनि अवस्थानम् ।”

3 *Buddhi*—The determinative faculty. In order to perceive an object, the first thing that is required is the outward instrument of the senses; then there is the organ which is really in the brain; and the third is the mind which joins the two. The impression thus gained of an object is presented to the *Buddhi* which reacts. Along with this reaction flashes *Ahamkāra* or the idea of egoism. The organs (*Indriyas*) together with the mind (*Manas*), the *Buddhi* and the *Ahamkāra* form the group called *Antahkarana* (the internal instrument). They are but the various processes in the mind-stuff called *Chitta*. From the infinite store-house of force in nature the *Chitta* absorbs some and sends out as thought. The outward objects always try to cause distraction of the *Chitta* whose natural inclination is to go back to its pure state. Hence the essence of Yoga is to restrain *Chitta* from its outward tendency and concentrate it on the real nature of the Self. Comp. the first aphorism of Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutras*, “Yoga is restraining the *Chitta* from taking various forms (*Vritti*).”

4 *But*—The word distinguishes the *Upāsana* from works. The *Chitta* can practise full concentration upon the object of knowledge as enjoined by the *Shastras* or understand their subtle meaning only when the *Buddhi* is purified of the effects of its accumulated sins by the performance of the *Nitya* and other works.

5 *Concentration etc.*—See note on *Buddhi*.

6 *Sacrifice*—The concluding portion of the passage is “by gifts, by penance, by fasting, and he who knows It becomes *Muni*.”

7 *As well as*—The word *cha* in the text implies that the knowledge of Brahman is attained only when the *Chitta* is purified of its sins. This is supported by the *Smṛiti* passage in the text.]

नित्यनैमित्तिकयोः उपासनानां च अवान्तरफलं पितृलोक-  
सत्यलोकप्राप्तिः, “कर्मणा पितृलोकः विद्यया देवलोकः” (बृः उः  
१।५।१६) इत्यादिश्रुतेः । १४

14. The other<sup>1</sup> results<sup>2</sup> of the *Nitya*<sup>3</sup> and the *Naimittika* Karma and of the *Upāsana* are the attainment of the *Pitṛiloka*<sup>4</sup> and the *Satvaloka*; as in *Sṛuti* passages such as, “By<sup>5</sup> sacrifice the world of the Fathers, by knowledge (*Upāsana*) the world of the Devas (are gained).” (*Bṛiha. Upa.* 1. 5. 16).

[1 *Other*—The direct result is meant. Purification of the *Buddhi* etc. as given in the preceding text is only an indirect but inevitable effect.



**2 Results**—The performance of the *Nitya* and the *Naimittika* works leads to the attainment of the *Pitriloka* whereas *Upāsana* helps the aspirant to attain the *Satyaloka*.

**3 Nitya etc.**—The *Prayashchitta* rites or the penances have been excluded as they do not produce any result after death. But in cases of the *Nitya* and the *Naimittika* works additional results, besides going to the higher worlds, have been mentioned in the scriptures.

**4 Pitriloka**—According to the Hindu Puranas the *Brahmāṇḍa* or the universe is divided into fourteen planes, viz., *Satya*, *Tapa*, *Maha*, *Jana*, *Svaha*, *Bhuvah* *Bhuh*, *Atala*, *Vitala*, *Sutala*, *Talātala*, *Mahātala*, *Rasātala* and *Pātāla*. The *Satya loka*, the highest plane, is divided into three sub-planes viz., *Brahmaloka*, *Vishnuloka* and *Shivvaloka*. The soul never comes back from the *Satyaloka*. But it returns to this earth from the *Pitriloka* which belongs to the *Bhuvār-loka*. The planes from the *Satyaloka* to the *Svar-loka* are known as the *Devaloka* or the region of the Gods.

**5 Vy etc.**—As to how the performance of works such as the *Nitya* and the *Naimittika* leads to the attainment of the *Pitriloka* which is said to be realised by the obsequial oblations (*Shrāddha*) only, see the *Vidvanmanoranjini Commentary*.]

**साधनानि—नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकेहामुत्रफलभोगविरागशमादिषट्क-सम्पत्तिमुमुक्षुत्वानि । १५**

15. The means for the attainment of Knowledge :—discrimination of things, real and unreal ; renunciation of the enjoyment of the fruits of actions in this world or hereafter ; six treasures, such as, self-control etc. ; and the desire for freedom.

**नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः तावत् ब्रह्म एव नित्यं वस्तु, ततः अन्यत् अखिलं अनित्यम्' इति विवेचनम् । १६**

16. Discrimination of things, real and unreal :—this consists of the discrimination that 'Brahman alone is the real<sup>1</sup> substance while all things other than It are unreal.'<sup>2</sup>

[Discrimination has been pointed out as the first *Sadhana* as without it renunciation is impossible.

**1 Real**—Unlimited by time. The knowledge of Brahman as the only Reality is possible only for him who has got a general comprehension of the import of the scriptures and who is an adept in the science of inference. There are innumerable *Shruti* passages which point out that Brahman alone is real. From inference also we can arrive at this conclusion. For whatever is divisible cannot be real. Again *Akāśha* and other material objects which have a beginning, cannot be real. Hence Brahman alone, which has no beginning or which cannot be said to have parts, is real.

**2 Unreal**—What is opposed to real.]

(To be continued)



## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda

The following short note received from a student of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, U. S. A., may be found interesting by our readers :

"It was my good fortune to be in Los Angeles at a time when Swami Vivekananda was giving lectures there. Although the subjects on which he spoke were new to me at that time, I was fascinated by them; and when I returned to Oakland and Swami came later and lectured in San Francisco, Oakland and Alameda, I was irresistibly attracted and was almost invariably one of his listeners.

"On one occasion it was announced that on a certain afternoon the Swami would give a lecture to advanced students at his place of residence. As I was very desirous of attending, I applied to Swami's secretary for permission to do so, at the same time telling her that I was not an advanced student. In answer I was given to understand that such being the case I would better not try to attend. Not satisfied, however, I applied to the Swami himself for permission to attend. He said most heartily, 'Come, and welcome, welcome, welcome!'

"The Swami's lecture was an intellectual and spiritual feast,—we seemed to be transported to higher regions of thought and feeling.

"A part of the afternoon was given to answering questions, some of which were somewhat trivial, but the Swami always answered with unfailing courtesy.

"The subject of diet was being discussed when a student asked, 'Swami, what about eating onions?' 'Well,' answered Swami, 'onions are not the best diet for a spiritual student, but how fond I was of them when I was a boy! I used to eat them and then walk up and down in the open air to get them from my breath.'

"The last half-hour of the afternoon was devoted to meditation and the Swami became completely lost to the external world. His presence seemed to radiate a divine influence which permeated our very being. We went home, our feet scarcely touching the ground. It seemed as if the Swami had given us to drink of the Divine Nectar."

Here indeed lay the real greatness of Swamiji.

Two more items may be added from another letter. An English lady who took Swamiji in 1900 to see Napoleon's tomb in Paris, says, "I see him now leaning over and looking down upon Napoleon's tomb and saying, 'A great man, a great force! Sival Sival!' And at St. Peter's in Rome, he said, 'This is splendid!' And when I said, amazed, 'You, Swamiji, like all this ceremony?' he replied, 'If you love a personal God, then given Him all your best incense, flowers, jewels and silk. There is nothing good enough.' A great wonder it was, knowing Swamiji."



### Tolstoy and India

Students of Tolstoy have often noted that his philosophy inclines more towards the Oriental than the Occidental. That has been one of the main reasons of his great popularity among the Oriental readers. But it was not generally known that the Oriental flavour of his serious writings was due mainly to his profound studies of the Oriental philosophies and religions. M. Paul Birukoff, a "leading Russian biographer of Leo Tolstoy and the constant companion of the Russian sage during the last few years of his life," observes in course of the Foreword of his latest work, *Tolstoy und der Orient* (an English Translation of the Foreword is published in the February issue of the *Modern Review* to which we are indebted for the extracts) :

"The thought of making the wisdom of the Orient accessible to the Russian people never left him. He projects a short compendium of the most important religions and points out their essential unity. This work too he cannot finish and finally contents himself with "The Thoughts of the Sages," in which first appear the Gospel, beside the ideas of Socrates, Buddha, Krishna, Leo Tse, Pascal and others

"At that time, i.e., at the end of the former and the beginning of the present century, Tolstoy comes to be regarded as an international genius in the whole world, in all its five parts, and his personality becomes the centre of all the exertions connected with him.

"He receives the works of authors and thinkers from all sides of the earth and exchanges letters with them. Always, however, his attention is riveted on the East and the Orient receives his sympathy above all.

"He reads the works of Swami Vivekananda about the philosophy of Yoga which appealed to him extraordinarily. He reads Baba Bharati's book about Krishna, the works of Shri Shankara Acharya about the philosophy of Vedanta and others.

"Finally he comes into immediate epistolatory communications with the Japanese, Chinese, Indians, Brahmans, Mohammedans, with revolutionists and with those who condemn force of every kind. India, ancient and modern, attracts him above all. He earnestly asks these Orientals to keep before their eyes the value of their precious ancient wisdom and warns them against the dangers of the West."

### The Greater India Society

On the 14th October, 1924, in a meeting at Calcutta where assembled many of the most learned gentlemen of Calcutta under the presidency of Prof. Jadunath Sarkar, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, was inaugurated the "Greater India Society," an event which we hailed with great delight. We have since received the papers of the Society together with its first bulletin from its Honorary Secretary, Dr. Kalidas Nag.

We have always held that unless the Indian mind was brought back to the consciousness of its past achievements, its present struggles for emancipation will be often mere gropings in the dark, and that a historical consciousness was an indispensable condition of true nationalism. It



is a sad fact however that we are amazingly ignorant of the achievements of our fathers. We scarcely know that we are the descendants of those giants of men whose cultural and spiritual dominion extended from one end of Asia to the other, if not farther.

The Society pertinently points to this sad oblivion by the motto it has chosen for itself, *ātmanam bidhi*, Know Thyself. The Society has taken upon itself the noble task of bringing us back to self-consciousness. It proposes to organise the study of Indian culture in Greater India, to arrange for the publication of the results of the researches into the history of India's spiritual and cultural relations with the outside world, to popularise the knowledge of Greater India, etc., etc. Its interest is not limited to India's past only, but extends also to its present, for it proposes to study the conditions of Indian settlers in foreign lands and aid them in bettering their conditions. It also aims at organising Hindu Cultural Missions to Greater India and other lands.

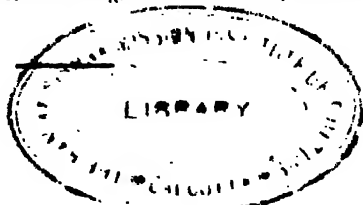
We look upon the establishment of this Society as one of the happiest events of the recent days. To know oneself is to be strong. The proverb 'Knowledge is Power' is never truer than in our case. To become conscious of a glorious heritage is to be filled with large hopes and indomitable power. We cannot therefore too highly estimate the value of such a venture as the foundation of this Society from the national point of view.

From the scholastic stand-point also, we are sure, it has a great usefulness and a bright future. Many of those who are associated with the Society are well-known for their profound scholarship and enjoy international reputation. If they take to their work with earnestness as we hope they will do, the achievements of the Society are bound to be very fruitful in the advancement of historical knowledge and the Society may one day become a great centre of the study of Indology.

We request our readers to render help to the Society by becoming its members and otherwise. Communications may be made with the Hon. Secretary at 91, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.

### A useful Bengali Magazine

We would like to draw the attention of our Bengali readers to the excellent and useful articles that are generally published in the pages of a little Bengali monthly, *Swasthya-Samāchār*, edited by Kartik Chandra Basu, M.B. It is as its name implies devoted to matters of health, considerations of sanitation, prevention of diseases and other allied topics. The articles are very popularly written and sometimes illustrated. We are sure the village population especially will be much benefited by their perusal. The price yearly is quite cheap, Rs. 2/- inclusive of postage. The paper can be had of the Editor at 45, Amherst Street, Calcutta.





## THE IDEALS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION

By KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA, M.A.

Principal, Rajendra College, Faridpur, Bengal

(Continued from page 81)

The restless activity of the Western world that disturbs the repose of the soul must not be mistaken for the *Karma-Yoga* of India. The true *Karma-Yogin*, in the words of Emerson, "must keep his head in solitude and hand in society." Such is the character of the activity of the Ramkrishna Mission. The monks of this Mission live in silence and solitude at regular intervals—for the life of the spirit requires it—and it is the spirit of silence that they bring to bear upon their work. A man cannot always work nor can he always meditate, worship and study. Bhagawan Ramkrishna has given us a clear warning against monotony in life. That is why the motto of the Mission is the harmony of the four classical paths of Jnana, Bhakti, Karma and Yoga.

The aim of the Mission is high ; its skill in work is matchless. Still a great deal more has to be done. A perfect net work has got to be spread throughout the length and breadth of the country. The name of Ramkrishna-Vivekananda must resound everywhere in the land. A complete reawakening of Hinduism must be brought about at any cost. The ideals of the Mission must be clearly distinguished from those of the Hindu Mahasabha which seems to be chiefly political in its outlook. What useful purpose will be served by the Mahasabha to the cause of the Hindus' religion is a matter not very clear to me. That the Hindus as a community should organise themselves for the purpose of defence goes without saying. But unless the true principles of Hinduism are inculcated upon the Hindus and made a living force no Mahasabha and no Sangathan will be able to lift them out of the slough. Until India is firmly set on her feet and made to rear her head the Ramkrishna Mission cannot think of rest.

What is wanted now is more men and more money—but men above all. Men coming forward, money will not be



wanting. That is why Swami Vivekananda has said: "Money is nothing. For the last twelve years of my life I did not know where the next meal would come from; but money and everything else I want must come, because they are my slaves and not I theirs; money and everything else must come. Must—that is the word. Where are the men? That is the question." How forcible the words! What is wanted now is an abundant supply of strong and intelligent youths who will take up the work of the Mission with perfect alacrity, in whose ears will constantly sound the voice of the prophet of the age and who will be the devoted practisers of the great mantram (message), *atmano mokshartham jagaddhitaya cha* (for one's own liberation and also for the good of the world). The great Swami wanted only one thousand such youths about thirty years ago. That number has not yet joined his rank because in his work there is no momentary excitement but sober and deliberate consecration of life. That verily the call of the Swami is the call of the Motherland, that the Swami's call is verily the call of India's God is a truth to be fully realised by the young men of India. The area of work is daily extending. It will soon have to be extended further afield. It is not only in India but in countries outside—in fact, in all the continents that the message of Ramkrishna-Vivekananda is to be boldly preached. One thousand workers are no longer sufficient for all the purposes of the Mission. Five thousand workers seem to be necessary at present. Is it too much for the Mission to expect five thousand strong and intelligent youths of character out of the three hundred millions of people inhabiting India? There is no fear whatever that population will decrease. Number is not everything. The most important factor is quality. What good can the country expect from men no better than crawling worms breeding fast and doing nothing?

It is five thousand competent workers that seem to be the present need of the Mission. But how is it that they are not forthcoming in spite of the clarion-call of Vivekananda still ringing through the air? Obstacles then there undoubtedly are. It is the duty of all, householders and Sannyasins alike, to remove these obstacles to the best of their power. It is the special duty of those who are teachers and journalists by profession, for the influence they exercise on the thoughts of youth is very potent indeed. THE OBSTACLES I REFER



TO APPEAR TO ME TO BE SIX IN NUMBER. The *first obstacle* is the absence from the mind of our youths of any clear conception of the ethical ideal or the meaning of human life. Their environment is calculated to blunt their moral sense. That anything has to be done beyond passing the examinations, marrying and earning one's livelihood as a Government servant, pleader or doctor is a matter of which very few are conscious at all. The supreme need of *Brahmacharya* without which there is no difference between man and beast is felt by very few of our youths. The *second obstacle* is the want of seriousness, the spirit of irreverence or levity (*a-sraddha*), the tendency to make light of everything however grave—a habit for which Carlyle's term is 'persiflage,' a habit which he rightly considers to be the bane of society. The *third obstacle* is the unrestricted publication of pornographic literature in the blessed name of Art. The *fourth obstacle* is brutal lethargy, idle talk and foolish and demoralising games and amusements. The *fifth obstacle* is the pernicious teaching of modern Europe that asceticism is anti-social, that it is an imperfect, perverse and erroneous ideal of life. Here the fault lies not less with our older men posing as teachers. When we hear from a lofty platform the deliberate opinion that the synthesis of *vidya* (spiritual wisdom) and *avidya* (nescience) constitutes the philosophy of our people and when even the Upanishads are quoted in support of this philosophy then I have no alternative but to quote these very Upanishads and say in reply: "Existing deep in the layers of Nescience, yet flattering themselves as so many sages, those wiseacres move constantly round the circle of birth and death like the blind led by the blind." Besides the five obstacles just touched on there is another one—not least because mentioned last. It is *Aesthetic Sentimentality masquerading as mysticism and spirituality* whose claims are iterated and re-iterated by a section of the press and the "cultured crowd" with a persistence worthy of a better cause. Its subtle poison is undermining the character of our youth and its "respectability" has assumed such abnormal proportions that to utter a protest against it is the height of temerity.

The obstacles mentioned above are the unmistakable signs of a grave social distemper. It is the bounden duty of all, householders and Sannyasins alike, to declare war *à outrance*



against the moral canker that is eating into the vitals of the nation. It is the duty *par excellence* of those who are teachers and journalists by profession. The Mission will never get workers as long as this duty is not properly discharged. *The taste of the nation must be radically changed.* Pornographic literature and effeminate literature must be banished altogether and the literature of strength and healthy literature must be triumphantly restored. It must be brought home to the Hindu that if he wants to have a "place in the sun" HE MUST BE RE-HINDUISSED, that is, his religion must be a thing of life and not of use and wont, he must give up his faint-heartedness and be a hero in the strife. He must combine in himself the spiritual fire of the Brahmin with the force and chivalry of the Kshatriya. In order that he may be all this he cannot do better than go deep into the wonderful life, *sadhana* (practice) and realisation of Ramkrishna, the fulfilment of Hinduism, and in order that he may understand Ramkrishna he cannot do better than read the speeches and writings of Swami Vivekananda, the accredited agent of Ramkrishna, "read those speeches and writings by day, meditate on them by night, peruse them again and again, study them, imprint them on his mind and impress them on his heart." Ramkrishna can be understood through Vivekananda alone. Any attempt to understand Ramkrishna, without reference to Vivekananda, his *alter ego*, is bound to fail as we know from our experience. The understanding of Ramkrishna is only another name for the re-awakening of Hinduism, the palingenesis of Hindustan. For the meaning of this re-awakening and for the place of Ramkrishna in this movement of regeneration let me conclude by quoting the solemn words of Vivekananda himself as they stand translated into English :

"Strong in the strength of this new spiritual renaissance, men after re-organising these scattered and disconnected spiritual ideals will be able to comprehend and practise them in their own lives and also to recover from oblivion those that are lost. And as the sure pledge of this glorious future, the all-merciful Lord has manifested, . . . . . in the present age, an incarnation which in point of completeness in revelation, its synthetic harmonising of all ideals and its promoting every sphere of spiritual culture, surpasses the manifestations of all past ages.



"So at the very dawn of this momentous epoch, the reconciliation of all aspects and ideals of religious thought and worship is being proclaimed ; this boundless, all-embracing Idea lying . . . so long concealed in the Religion Eternal and its scriptures and now re-discovered . . . is being declared to humanity in a trumpet voice.

"This new dispensation of the age (*yuga-dharma*) is the source of great good to the whole world, specially to India ; and the inspirer of this dispensation, Sri Bhagavan Ramkrishna, is the reformed and remodelled manifestation of all the past great epoch-makers in religion. O man, have faith in this, and lay it to heart.

"The dead never return ; the past night does not re-appear ; a spent-up tidal wave does not rise anew ; neither does man inhabit the same body over again. So from the worship of the dead past, O man, we invite you to the worship of the living present ; from the regretful brooding over by-gones, we invite you to the activities of the present ; from the waste of energy in retracing lost and demolished pathways, we call you back to broad new-laid highways lying very near. He that is wise, let him understand.

"Of that power which at the very first impulse has roused distant echoes from all the four quarters of the globe, conceive in your mind the manifestation in its fulness ; and discarding all idle misgivings, weaknesses and the jealousies characteristic of enslaved peoples, come and help in the turning of this mighty wheel of new dispensation (*yuga-chakra*) !"

(Concluded)

## THE EAST JUDGES THE WEST

We quote below a portion of a recent letter of a London correspondent to the *Hindu*, Madras, which throws a strong light on the silent change of outlook going on among the Christian missionaries. The change is certainly welcome. But we think it must be more thorough and fundamental to meet fully the needs of mankind. Christians must learn to conceive the Christ as an *aspect* of the impersonal Divine Ideal. For the world does not want at present persons so much as principles. And if it is to be given persons at all, then not merely Christ,



but also Krishna, Buddha, Rama, and other prophets and Incarnations.

The correspondent writes :

I have on more than one occasion remarked that in progressive Christian circles in this country, there is a growing appreciation of the Indian point of view in matters of religion, combined with an intensely sympathetic attitude towards your ideals and aspirations. I heard a sermon last Sunday morning at Wimbledon Church (Christ Church, Congregational), which I wish could be broadcast amongst all Europeans who have any connection with the East. The preacher was the Rev. S. J. Hooper, whose enlightened discourses on various aspects of the Christian faith have attracted to his ministry an increasing congregation of thoughtful people. Your readers will be interested, I am sure, in the following summary of what he said on this occasion, even though all his remarks may not command approval.

The subject was tersely announced : "East judges West," the sermon being based upon the familiar words of Jesus, "Ye are the light of the world." Mr. Hooper said that if they were to succeed in propagating their faith, what Christians must take to the East especially was not Western civilisation or even Western forms of ritual and organisation, but rather the person of Jesus Christ. The very fact of our religion being Western (although Eastern in origin) was one of the gravest objections to it in India. It was only when they saw that Christ was not inseparable from Western civilisation that the people of India were prepared to listen to him. The centering of everything upon the person of Jesus had cleared the issue for some of the modern missionaries in India and given new life to their work.

But that same process, said the preacher, had come back upon them with a terrific judgment. "India to-day is doing nothing less than judging Christians in the white light of the spirit of Jesus. They have caught the meaning of what it is to be a Christian, and in the light of that they are judging us." Mr. Hooper proceeded to refer to Dr. Stanley Jones' book, "The Christ of the Indian Road," which has made a profound impression upon religious people over here. In that book, said he, there was a good deal that would explain the slow progress of Christianity across the seas. In South Africa, for instance,



there is a Christian church which displays a notice : "Asiatics and Hottentots not allowed." Mahatma Gandhi was denied admission to that church because he was an Asiatic—"and so was Jesus !" cried the preacher. Indians felt pained and scornful, he said, as they had good reason to be, when they heard of that incident. It might be asked, "Are not low-caste Hindus forbidden to enter their own temples?" That might be so, but the point he made was that, while judging themselves by their own religion, the Indians judged us in the light of the spirit of Jesus, and they were quite right in doing so. "We are bound to be judged by the religion we profess and by the Christ we say we follow."

Mr. Hooper quoted a Hindu as saying : "If you call one of us a Christian man, he is complimented, but if you call him a Christian he is insulted." That was penetrating. That Hindu saw a vast difference between a nominal Christian and a Christ-like man. There was another Hindu—a teacher—who declared : "I want to become a Christian, but I do so in spite of the lives of Europeans I have seen here. They seem to have two loathings : one is religion and the other is water." In the latter connexion the preacher repeated Stanley Jones' story of the two Europeans who fought a duel and killed each other. The Hindus, out of the kindness of their hearts, buried them, and wishing to make an offering to the spirits of the dead, they came to the conclusion, after thinking it over, that these men would love in death what they had loved in life, so they placed as a memorial on the tomb a cigar box and a whisky bottle!

Mr. Hooper's congregation was next reminded that the East does not judge the West merely by the Westerners who go East. The Press, aided by the telegraph and the wireless, had made the world very small. We knew of happenings in India within a few hours of their occurrence ; and the same was true in India of events in Western countries. With what result? He gave the answer by quoting the following conversation which took place at a conference in India between some American missionaries and a group of earnest Nationalists:—

Missionary : "My brothers, I have been talking to you about Christ. I want you to tell me frankly why you do not accept him. Do not spare me—I am not the issue—tell me frankly."



A Hindu: "You ask us to be Christians: may we ask how Christian is your own civilisation? Don't you have corruption at your own central Government in Washington?" (This was just after the oil scandal revelations.)

Another: "Don't you lynch Negroes in America?"

A third: "You have had Christianity in the West all these centuries, and though Jesus is the Prince of Peace, you have not yet learned the way out of war. Don't you know any more about Christianity than that?"

The Hindus knew, Mr. Hooper went on, that the Founder of Christianity was colour-blind where men were concerned. He looked upon men apart from race, birth and colour. In him there was neither Greek nor Barbarian, Jew nor Gentile, but one race—and all brothers. And it was in the light of this conception that the East would judge the West. The Indians had a story concerning the origin of White man: "God asked the man who is now white what he had done with his brother, and *he turned white with fear!*"

Could they wonder that the brother of Rabindranath Tagore had said: "Jesus is ideal and wonderful, but you Christians—you are not like him."

The East, said the preacher, judges the West and calls us back to our Lord and Master. We ought to welcome the judgment. Only as we are saved ourselves can we save the races of the world. Only as we are really like Jesus, can we be what he wants to call us, "the light of the world." Dr. Stanley Jones asked Mahatma Gandhi what could be done to naturalise Christianity in India. "I would suggest first," was the reply, "that all your Christians, missionaries and all, must begin to live more like Jesus Christ." The great Indian saint was right. That is the first thing needful. We have never taken Jesus seriously enough. As one has said: "Our Churches are made up of people who would be equally shocked to see Christianity doubted or put into practice." From every side the call was coming to the West—"Be Christian, but Christian in a bigger, broader way than you have ever been." Yes, said Mr. Hooper in conclusion, we must be Christ-like. In no other way can we become the Light of the World!

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## HINDU MONKS

BY A WESTERN WANDERER

It was a glorious November morning and the beautiful island of Ceylon was flooded with golden sunshine when our steamer on her way to Calcutta anchored at Colombo to take in cargo. "We will be here two days," the jovial captain said, "make the best of your time." Heeding his wise counsel I went ashore, hired a rikshaw, and went sight-seeing.

In the neat little vehicle, drawn by a fleet-footed Singhalese, I rolled swiftly over red avenues beneath glossy surrya trees, past luxuriant oriental gardens and orange groves, till we came to the Pettah or native quarters of the town. Here my man slackened his pace and led me into a narrow street lined on both sides with little open shops displaying an endless variety of luscious fruits and curious eastern merchandise. Slowly we made our way through swarms of vociferous, sharp-featured natives scantily dressed in gay-coloured loin-cloths.

Among this mass of dusky humanity jostling each other or bickering and bargaining I spied a splendidly built youth of dignified bearing. His classic features were shaded by a red turban and his lithe body covered with a loose salmon-coloured robe. His quaint dress and calm behavior in the midst of all the hubbub attracted my attention, and curiosity made me follow him afoot. He was a Sadhu, or Hindu monk, begging his food. At each shop he halted and held out a bowl of cocoanut-shell to receive his *bhiksha*, or alms. At one stall he received a handful of rice, at another a little pulse, and at a fruitstand a boy, after saluting him with bowed head and folded hands, presented him with a banana. A group of laughing children obstructed his way, and one after the other knelt on the ground and with their foreheads touched his bare feet. He bent down, laid his hand on each little head, smiled at the merry group and went on his way.

At a corner of the street he came upon an old fellow who with a heavy cane belabored his bullocks straining at a heavy load. In a flush of anger, his eyes flashing, the young man raised his arm to strike the fellow. But he bethought himself and with the words "Have mercy brother, have mercy!" turned away.

Then I lost sight of him. But toward evening I saw him again at a Buddhist monastery where he stood among a group of yellow-garbed, shaven-headed monks worshipping with incense and flowers the image of the Buddha. After the ceremony he told me that he had come from India to study with the Buddhists the teachings of the Compassionate One, for India has gone back to her Vedas and Ceylon is now the stronghold of Buddhism.

In India the number of Sadhus belonging to different orders is calculated to be over five millions. They come from all ranks of life



and live on the charity of the people. Dressed in orange-colored tunics and turbans, with shaven faces, they look clean and picturesque. But when they almost denude themselves, as some orders do, wearing only red cloths the rest of their brown bodies besmeared with white ashes, their long sun-bleached hair hanging over their shoulders in matted locks or coiled on top of their heads, they present a weird and bizarre appearance. And it is not to be wondered at that the most ignorant and superstitious among the Hindus have a good deal of awe mixed with their reverence for these strange men. They ascribe to them supernatural powers and believe that the Sadhu can curse as well as bless. "And their curses," they tell you, "are sure to come true."

Sadhhus can be found all over India. They climb the snow-capped Himalayas, cross the burning deserts and wander in the sunny plains of Hindustan. There is not a hamlet where they are not known. I have met them everywhere during my travels in India.

At Puri, a place of pilgrimage on the beautiful Bay of Bengal, I have seen them in the dim light of gathering dusk among vast crowds of excited, shouting pilgrims forcing their way into the ancient temple of Jagannath, almost struggling in their mad anxiety to be among the first to worship the crude images of Krishna, his sister Subhadra and his brother Balaram which are periodically renewed and enshrined there. And I have wondered at their enthusiasm during the Car-Festival in June, when, under a blazing sun, they scrambled with hosts of pilgrims for a hold on the cable attached to the cumbersome car of Jagannath by which the idols from the temple are taken to the pavillion where they are installed during the next week. They strained and jerked and hauled at the rope moving the clumsy car a few feet each time, till the distance of about a mile had been covered. At each new effort I could hear their voices ring out above the din of the crowd as they shouted, "Jai Jagannathji ki jai!" "Victory to the Lord of the world!"

At Benares, most holy of holy cities, on cool evenings after sweltering days, I have sat and conversed with them at the magnificent bathing-ghats, with the Ganges flowing at our feet, carrying on her bosom masses of flowers, wreaths and little bamboo boats--symbols of life--offered her by thousands of devotees from all over India. There I have disputed with them the sacredness of their holy river, but finally, for good luck, added my little craft to theirs, pushing it off upon the stream loaded with marigolds, sweets and a tiny light. And - to complete the act - sent with it a prayer that "Mother Ganga" might accept my humble offering.

Near Allahabad, in Northern India, I have bathed with them, when the heavens were most auspicious, a little apart from the dense crowd of pilgrims, but still within thrice holy *Prayag* where the white Ganges and black Jumna mingle their sacred waters. There I have watched them as they stood waist-deep in the icy water with uplifted hands invoking the sun with the Vedic prayer: "O Sun, controller of all, collect thy golden rays and gather up thy burning effulgence that I may behold thy spiritual form." And at the monastery across the river I have visited their underground caves where they sat for hours, like living bronze statues, in solemn meditation.



At Brindaban, city of a thousand temples, mecca of Hindu devotees, I have mingled with them as they worshipped and prostrated before the images of Radha and Krishna, incarnations of Divine Love, offering at their feet fragrant, yellow blossoms of the *Kadamba* tree, for the god and goddess love these flowers. Here, following an ancient rule laid down by their scriptures, they lived on *Madhukari*, which means, *like the bee*. As bees gather honey from different flowers so the Sadhus begged their food from door to door.

And at Uttara Kasi, a little village tucked away in the Himalayas, not far from the source of the Ganges, where hundreds of Sadhus live during the summer months to escape the heat of the plains, I have visited their quiet *Ashramas*, or hermitages, and in the shade of their neat bamboo huts, seated on the soft grass, sometimes sharing their simple meals, have discussed with them the subtleties of their abstruse philosophies.

I well remember my first meeting with wandering monks in India. While travelling in the Himalayas, in Kumaon, where the forests were ablaze with scarlet rhododendron blossoms and glittering, snowy peaks engirdled the sun-steeped valleys, I came one evening to a pine-wooded knoll sheltered by massive gray mountains. Here I pitched my tent. The night was bitterly cold, and my sleep was disturbed by the deep-toned grunting of a prowling tiger. My coolies became panicky and built a fire to keep the brute at a safe distance. Shortly after dawn I arose. I donned sweater and greatcoat to protect myself against the penetrating chill of the upper region, and then to my tent came two Sadhus, fine, bold, upstanding fellows. They were naked except for a muslin loin-cloth which certainly afforded little protection against the chill air that made my teeth to chatter, swathed as I was in garments to suit the climate. They greeted me with the customary Sanskrit salutation, "*Namo Narayanaya*" (Salutation to the Lord within thee). Then, in Hindi, they told me that they had lost their way.

Glad of this opportunity to talk with these strange men I invited them inside my tent. They entered leaving their staves and grass sandals outside, and squatted on a little carpet that covered the bare ground of my tent. They told me that they had spent the night in the open half a mile from my camp.

"Did you hear the tiger?" I asked.

"Yes," one of the monks replied in an off-hand way, "and we saw one last evening."

"And had you no fear?"

"Wild animals do not molest us for we never have done harm to any creature," was the unexpected reply.

Then I expressed my astonishment to see them so scantily dressed in this cold region, to which the elder of the monks replied, "We are accustomed to all climates, and through Yoga practice are able to still the demands of the body."

"But," I interposed, "there are physical laws to which the body is subject."



"True," was the quick response, "we do not claim supernatural powers. By observing certain practices we regulate the functions of the bodily organs. Thus we overcome the effects of heat and cold and keep the body strong and healthy."

My curiosity aroused, I requested the younger man to show me some of these practices. This he consented to do. He twisted and bent his body in a way reminding me of the old-time contortionists of the circus and vaudeville stage. Nerves were pressed and muscles contracted to affect different organs and to regulate the circulation of the blood. The performance over, the men rose, and with a salutation left my tent. With the grace and light, elastic step of panthers they followed the winding path among the pines, and soon disappeared from my sight.

In Northern India I visited a monastery close to the Himalayas, in a sheltered valley at the foot of towering mountains. I had sent word to the *Mahant*, or abbot, expressing my desire to visit him, and had received a courteous and inviting reply. On the appointed day, a bright September morning, I set out on foot. The road led through a forest where long-tailed, gray monkeys jumped across my path, and green parrots flew among the pines and deodars shrieking as they pursued one another.

When I approached the grounds of the monastery the abbot, a rotund little man with kindly face, dressed in a flame-colored tunic, a little red cap on his gray head and country-made slippers on his otherwise bare feet, was busy in his garden tending the flowers. He looked up, and seeing me put aside his watering-can and slowly came to meet me.

"Come and see my flowers. I am very proud of my garden!" he began with a smile in his genial brown eyes.

"With pleasure!" I responded in Hindi, the language in which he spoke.

We entered the cool, shady grounds and strolling leisurely among the flowers and bushes talked as if we were old friends with a common love for growing things. A sharp-featured monk in an orange robe was digging around a rose-bush, and another, also in orange garb, was drawing water from a well. We nodded as we passed.

"There are six Sadhus here at present," the abbot said as he stooped to pick a beautiful crimson rose which he offered me. "Our number is constantly changing for Sadhus live a wandering life. 'As flowing water does not become stagnant, so the wandering monk does not become corrupted,' is the common saying among us. There are few who live permanently in monasteries."

We came to an alluring bower covered with honeysuckle. Here a middle-aged monk seated cross-legged on a flat stone was chanting sacred texts from a Sanskrit scripture.

"This is Swami Atmananda," the abbot said. "He makes it a rule never to stay in a place more than one night. He came yesterday and will leave us to-day."

The monk took no notice of us. In a deep solemn voice he chanted:

"Our meditation is directed toward Thee who art the adorable self-effulgent Light of the universe.

Illuminate our minds with Thy divine wisdom."



We passed on, and following a winding avenue lined with marigolds and shaded by pomegranate and lime trees, came to the monastery embowered amidst rich foliage. It was a plain, white, stone building with a veranda facing the east. Here we rested on a rustic bench silently enjoying the charming view over undulating hills and remote blue mountain ranges.

"Let us step inside," the abbot proposed when we had rested.

Passing through a number of high-ceilinged, whitewashed rooms with cement floors on which mats were spread, each room containing one or two sleeping-cots, and a few pictures of Hindu saints hung on the walls, we came to the library, a large room with a square table in the center and books arranged on shelves against the walls. In a corner, on a little mat, sat an aristocratic-looking young monk engaged in the preparation of a *japamala*, or rosary. He had one hundred and eight beads, each a berry of the *rudraksha* tree, which he strung on a silken thread. Whenever a new bead was added he made a knot in the string and muttered a mantram which forms part of the daily prayers of millions of Hindus.

We left the monk with his occupation, and squatted on a palm-leaf mat close to the book-shelves. The abbot producing one scripture after the other read to me his favorite passages. He loved his books and handled them with care. With reverence he held each volume to his bowed forehead before replacing it.

"Will you prepare tea for us, Swamiji?" he asked the young monk who had risen from his seat.

"Certainly, Maharaj!" he replied bowing his head.

When he had left the room the abbot told me that this monk halted at the monastery to follow the time-honored rule of *Chaturmasya*, that is, of staying in one place during the four months of the rainy season. "It is difficult to travel during these months," he said, "and we do not like to step on the many insects that crawl over the road during this season."

The young monk acted as cook for the little group, in which he was assisted by a clear-eyed, clear-skinned boy, about fifteen years old, who now softly entered the room, barefoot and dressed in the white tunic of the neophyte. Noiselessly he placed before us two brass tumblers of tea and a copper platter with sweetmeats. Then he placed around my neck a garland of sweet-smelling white flowers. This little act of courtesy provoked from the abbot a smile of satisfaction. The boy bowed his head, and with his hands folded against his breast left the room.

After sipping the very sweet tea and tasting of the sweetmeats, I requested the abbot to tell me his own story. He hesitated a moment. Then, in a very earnest tone, he said, "My story is simple. Love of the religious life was inborn with me; I carried it over from a previous existence. As I grew up I became more and more disgusted with the vanity of a worldly life. I approached a *Guru* and was initiated. I took the vows of poverty and chastity, changed my worldly clothing for the orange robe, and wandered from one holy place to another accepting such food and shelter as chance did offer. Sometimes I met with great difficulties, but the good God always came to my rescue."



Then there was silence. An expression of peace and calm stole over the old man's face. When he spoke again, he quoted from a Buddhist scripture a quaint stanza addressed to Sadhus :

"Go and consider not thy path ;  
 Fear nothing, demand nothing.  
 Like the rhinoceros, wander thou alone.  
 Even as the lion, not trembling in danger ;  
 Even as the wind, free and never caught in a net ;  
 Even as the lotus-leaf, unstained by the water ;  
 Like the rhinoceros, wander thou alone."

The good monk was silent. Not wishing to disturb his happy mood I wished him God's blessings, and rose.

"Go in peace, my son," he said very softly, his hands raised in benediction. I bowed my head and turned away. At the garden-gate a long-forgotten sloka from an ancient scripture flashed through my mind : "O Sadhu ! May thy presence bring such peace and blessing that even the roadside dust is not disturbed by thy passing." And I wondered whether that great peace descended on the flowers that seemed to thrive so well under the abbot's gentle touch.

The recollection of this pleasant visit was still fresh with me when I met a Sadhu of quite different type. The evening shadows were moving slowly across the dusty road along the edge of a jungle by which I approached a village in Central India. By the side of the road, near mud-built cottages, brown children were playing in the dust. The cows were home from their pastures and munched their scanty fare of coarse straw. In the village the evening-cooking fires were burning, and volumes of fragrant smoke came curling through the open doors of clay-built kitchens.

I pitched my tent in a palm-grove, and after the evening meal sauntered about the village on the outskirts of which I came upon a curious scene. In front of an isolated straw hut under the spreading branches of a fatherly old tree, sat a tall Sadhu, about thirty years old, scantily dressed in a pale-red clout. His bare upper body and long, matted hair, bleached by the sun, were besmeared with white ashes. He sat before a burning log, the *dhuni*, or sacred fire, which, according to the rule of his order, he lit wherever he spent the night. Around the fire sat a group of men with whom he was chatting.

Interested in the scene I joined the group. The monk had tramped through different parts of India, and was now relating his experiences gathered in distant lands. He held his audience spellbound with vivid descriptions of how people in other provinces dressed, talked and prepared their food. He was a jolly fellow, and with his stories provoked hearty laughter from his admiring audience. One of the men handed him a *chillum*, or pipe, of tobacco mixed with *ganja*, an intoxicating drug. He filled his lungs with the pungent smoke which he blew out in large, white volumes. Then, his hands and head keeping time, he sang in a high-pitched, singsong voice, in his native dialect :

"Call on the Lord,  
 Call on the Lord, brother.



He is the Helmsman who steers us  
Across this ocean of Life."

Two women draped from head to foot in white saris slowly approached the scene, and kneeling before the monk, their heads bowed to the ground, shyly placed before him an offering of milk and sweets. Then they rose, and like two mysterious phantoms retreated to a dark corner behind the men where they squatted on the ground. To give something to a "holy man" is considered a meritorious act ; and as the group grew larger the offerings increased.

The men now began to propose religious questions which the monk answered without the least hesitation. Sometimes the answers were abrupt, a single word, or a quotation from some Veda ; or it was a story or parable from Hindu scripture or epic.

"How can we know God?" a young peasant asked.

"By desiring to know Him," came like a flash. "Let me tell you a story. Once a young man came to a sage with the same question. The sage said, 'Come to-morrow morning, and I will settle your doubts.' The youth came, and they went together to a river to perform their morning ablutions. When they entered the river the sage taking hold of the young man pushed him under the water. The youth struggled to free himself. Then the sage pulled him out, and asked, 'What did you desire most when I held you in the stream?' 'A breath of air,' was the natural reply. 'Very true,' said the sage, 'when your desire to know God becomes as strong as was your desire for air when I held you under the water then you will know Him.' "

The moon now appeared from behind a magnificent mango tree bathing the tender jungle foliage in ethereal beauty. The monk rose, and taking the offerings which he had received distributed them among his seated audience, keeping for himself only a cup of milk. The food thus sanctified by the touch of a Sadhu is called *prasadam*, or consecrated food, and the common people receive it with great reverence.

When the offerings had been distributed everyone rose. I exchanged a few words of greeting with the monk, and walked back to my tent. A silvery gauze spread over the road, and enveloped the sleeping village. The bark of a jackal came from the jungle, and a night-bird answered with a shrill cry. Then there was silence, and I retired.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### The Late Swami Prakashananda

News has been received with painful surprise that Swami Prakashananda, Head of the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, California passed away on the 13th February.

### Swami Paramananda's Tour

On Monday, October 25th, after three months at the Ananda Ashrama, Swami Paramananda left for Boston, stopping a few hours at Chicago, where he was entertained by friends and where he delivered



an address before the Kenmore Club. On the third Sunday after reaching his Boston Centre, he went, on the invitation of the Rev. Albert P. Grier, Pastor of "The Church of the Truth," to New York City, leaving Boston after the morning Service and arriving in New York in time to conduct the Church's evening Service. The next day, Monday, the Swami conducted a noon meditation class for Dr. Grier, being introduced by the Rev. Elliot White, assistant Pastor of Grace Church, one of New York's oldest, largest and most beautiful churches. For two Sundays the Swami made this trip, meeting many old friends and making many new ones. In addition to other activities he was guest of honor and chief speaker at the bi-weekly luncheon, given at Ceylon Restaurant by the "Fellowship of Faith," and addressed a gathering at the home of a friend in Scarsdale, a suburb of New York. While in New York, the Swami met Swami Raghavananda of the New York Vedanta Society.

#### **Swami Akhilananda taking charge of the Boston Centre**

After Swami Paramananda's departure for the east, all Services and Classes at Ananda-Ashrama were conducted by his assistant, Swami Akhilananda. Those who have heard the Swami have appreciated his simple, direct manner of presenting the teaching and the earnestness and fervour of spirit he expresses through his words. The Swami continued to conduct all meetings until the end of November, when Swami Paramananda wired for him to join him in Boston in order to assist in the work there. The Tuesday following the Swami's arrival, he was informally introduced to the Boston members at the Class, and on the following Thursday was guest of honor at a large reception at the Centre where a formal introduction took place, Swami Paramananda urging everyone present to co-operate with the new Swami in all possible ways. In response Swami Akhilananda spoke eloquently on true brotherhood and was accorded a warm and hearty welcome. Music and refreshments rounded out a memorable evening, for Swami Akhilananda's coming marks the opening of a new phase in the Boston work. After seeing this well started, Swami Paramananda left for California, fulfilling en route, lecture engagements at Cincinnati, Louisville and Chicago, and reached California in time to celebrate Christmas at Ananda-Ashrama.

#### **Christmas Celebration at Vedanta Centre, Boston**

On Christmas Eve, a little Christ altar with its flowers and candles and picture of Virgin and Child sent its beams out through the front window of the Vedanta Centre of Boston to greet the devoted members who were picking their way through the rain to gather together and pay their homage of praise and prayer at the feet of the Divine Child. As the worshippers entered the garlanded chapel, their gaze became fixed upon the main altar beneath the symbol, "Om." It was laden with a lavish offering of pure white flowers and Christmas greens. At its foot, two tall candles and a circle of flickering white lights, and white roses, guarded the spot where the great triangle, formed of



three red vigil lights and symbolic of descending Deity, rested its point in a lotus cup.

With the ringing of chimes and the burning of incense, the Service began. Then came the singing of ancient Christmas carols of many lands, now by single voices and now by the entire assembly, alternating with the reading of Scripture and chanting of Sanskrit prayers by Swami Akhilananda, who has recently been put in charge of the Boston Centre and who for the first time was conducting Christmas Service in America. At one point in the Service, the singing ceased and the Swami gave a very intimate talk on the "Significance and Necessity of Incarnations." In the course of his address, he explained how the ideal of an impersonal God and abstract principles might satisfy the demands of the intellect, and yet leave most people helpless. "We do not know what to do with the wealth of our emotions," he said. "Most of us ordinary human beings understand Deity only when we see It embodied in a limited human life. We crave a personal God to whom we can surrender our life. By worshipping this personal God, we satisfy the tremendous need of the emotional side of our nature, and by serving Him we satisfy another side of our nature. To-night we are celebrating the birth of such an Incarnation. Let us take this time for meditation and renewed consecration, that we may be filled with pure love and that our lives may shine forth with the glory of Him who is our Ideal."

#### **R. K. Mission Sevashram, Kankhal**

The report to hand of the Kankhal Sri Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram for the year 1925 shows that it served during that year 602 patients in its indoor hospital and at its outdoor dispensary 45,626 patients of which 19,966 were new cases. It also conducted a night school for the depressed classes and maintained a library for the local Sadhus, Vidyarthi, etc. The Sevashram had its area extended by purchase of 4 *pucca* bighas of the adjoining land on which it proposes to erect Workers' Quarters, Rest House, Guest House, Night School Building, etc.

The financial condition however is not at all satisfactory. It must be conceded that the Sevashram is doing an important work in that locality. It therefore hopes that its following needs will be promptly met by the generous public. It needs Rs. 7,000 for the Workers' Quarters, Rs. 5,000 for the Night School Building, Rs. 8,000 for the Guest House, Rs. 5,000 for the Rest House, permanent endowment fund for 54 beds at Rs. 3,000 per bed, and several thousand rupees for the equipment of the wards. These are urgent requirements, and we hope the appeal of the Sevashram will not go in vain. Contributions may be sent to (1) Swami Kalyanananda, Hon. Secy., R. K. Mission Sevashram, Kankhal P.O., Saharanpur Dt., U. P.; or (2) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta; or (3) The President, Ramkrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal.

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# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।  
*Katha Upa. I. III. 14.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES

10th March, 1921 (continued)

The Swami said: "*Sattva* gives self-control, *rajas* evokes activity and *tamas* degrades. *Tamas* must be changed into *rajas* or activity. *Tamas* is like sleepiness in snow,—fatal. If one takes a fatal dose of opium, he should be forcibly kept from falling into sleep, even by physical torments; for to sleep then is to die. Indians are going down into *tamas* under the pretext of *sattva*. Swamiji tried hard to whip them into activity."

Some one asked: "Why this degradation?"

The Swami replied: "The reason is the usual one;—they have strayed away from the ideal."

"Please 'whip' them yourself."

"What more whipping do you want? Have I not been doing it ever so long? Or why should I talk and talk like this? I could remain satisfied with my personal spiritual practices. Do you mean I should whip literally? The fact is that unless we have the desire to wake up, no outside provocation is of any avail."



"It all happens through the Lord's will. He is holding the thread of everything in His hands, and making us dance like dolls. Children do not understand. We also are little better than children.

"If it is His will that you would help any one, He will fill your heart with wonderful patience and sympathy for him, and He will bring him to you.

"A man went to a Sadhu to become his disciple. The Sadhu, before accepting him, informed him of all the hardships of a disciple's life. The man replied: 'Sire, make me a Guru directly.' For then he will be saved from the hard austerities. If you always spare yourself, you cannot hope to accomplish anything. . . .

"The Yogis used to do impossible things. They could even change the sex of a foetus. Numerous instances of this are recorded in the books. There is no reason why it cannot be done,—the Yogis had mastered its secret.

The Swami said of K— that he used to feel a greater joy in serving patients than in meditation and repetition of the Lord's name. "It is a wonderful thing—serving man looking upon him as God Himself—as instituted by Swamiji. Shall I send for K— ?" said the Swami, "you may ask him personally. Whenever C— admitted a new worker into the Sevashrama, he would extract a promise from him that he (the worker) would readily do all kinds of service required of him. And thus for twenty years he conducted the Sevashrama beautifully. There must be some fixed principles or no true work is possible.

"When Ka— begged Swamiji to initiate him into Sannyasa, Swamiji said to him: 'I want money; I am seriously thinking of selling you as a coolie to a tea-garden. Are you agreed?' Ka— also seriously replied: 'Yes, Swamiji, I am.' And that is exactly what Ka— has done; he has sold himself into Swamiji's service. Indeed this is the only way to success."

*11th March, 1921*

It was the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. The Swami was recounting stories of Swamiji. He said: "Once in America Swamiji was speaking against the existence of God, when one of his audience stood up and asked angrily: 'Sir,



do you mean to say that there is no God?' 'No,' Swamiji at once replied, 'there is no dearth of God. There are three hundred millions of gods in India ; I can give you as many as you like.'

"Swamiji knew that there was no lack of spirituality in India. If we can only give our people physical nourishment, they will again manifest spirituality. We are more cultured than other peoples. The Western civilisation is certainly inferior to ours.

"Swamiji held that half the success of his lectures was due to his wonderful voice. . . .

"I find now that longevity is desirable. For long experience brings dispassion for the world. One cannot renounce without enjoying.

"*Pravritti and Nivritti*—propensity for outer activity and cessation from it—are like building up a new business and winding up an old one. In the former case one is eager to grow and spread ; in the latter, one yearns to get rid of it anyhow.

"The Westerners also have renunciation,—they can do anything for their country. We in India do not understand country, but we are ever ready to give our lives for religion.

"In New York, I had to hold a Sunday class. Before going to the class, I would meditate on my subject for about an hour. That would be enough for me. Gradually however I acquired self-confidence. People do not care so much for language in a lecture as for ideas. They try to follow your thoughts."

*Here ends the second series of Swami Turiyananda's conversations. We hope to present our readers another series next year. In the meantime we shall take up the publication of the conversations and reminiscences of Holy Mother, the first instalment of which was published in our last December issue. —EDITOR.*

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## FIRE-BATH OF REASON

BY THE EDITOR

Some at least of our readers, we presume, have been following the monthly publication of the *Essence of Vedanta*, the translation of the *Vedāntasāra*, an excellent primer of the Vedanta philosophy. They must have noted that the book has given careful consideration to the qualifications of those who are entitled to study it. In the February issue, the qualifications of the *adhikāri*, that is to say, of one competent to study Vedanta, have been extensively enumerated and explained. We may quote them here: "He is the only competent student who has obtained a general comprehension of the entire Vedas by studying them and the Vedāngas in the prescribed method, who has cleansed his mind of all sins of either this or previous births by avoiding all actions as are actuated by desires and forbidden in the scriptures and by performing the daily and occasional obligatory rites, and who has adopted the four *sādhānās* or means of attaining spiritual knowledge." These four *sādhānās* are the discrimination between the real and the unreal; the aversion to the enjoyment of the fruits of one's actions here or hereafter; the group of six attributes—calmness or tranquillity (resting of the mind steadfastly on the Real after detaching it from sense-objects), self-control (withdrawing the sense-organs from sense-objects), self-withdrawal (the mind-function ceasing to act by means of external objects), forbearance (bearing of afflictions without caring to redress them, being at the same time free from anxiety or lament on their score), faith (acceptance by firm judgment of the mind as true of what the scriptures and the Guru instruct), self-settledness (constant concentration of the intellect on the ever-pure Brahman), and yearning for freedom (the desire to free oneself, by realising one's true nature, from all bondages).

Were these conditions enforced seriously, it is doubtful if many had cared to taste the *Essence of Vedanta* in the pages of *Prabuddha Bharata*. To many, especially to our Western readers, these preliminary conditions have probably appeared fantastic. It is absurd, they may have thought, that the study of a philosophical treatise should be hedged round with so many



difficult conditions. It is reasonable to expect that a student of Vedanta should have a fine intellect to be able to grasp its subtle arguments and inferences. It may also be granted perhaps that the common moral virtues and dutifulness help to produce a philosophical aptitude. But why those other conditions about doing and refraining from certain actions and those implied in the "four *sādhana*s?" Nor do they pertain to this life only, but stretch beyond to past and future lives. These are good enough for making a saint. But a fine intellect is the only requirement of a student of philosophy.

It is not the Vedantasara alone that is so extravagant of conditions. Other Vedantic treatises also insist on them. Thus *Viveka-Chudāmani*, *Sarva-Vedānta-Siddhānta-Sāra-Samgraha*, *Upadesa-Sāhasri*, *Gītā*, some Upanishads and *Brahma-Sutras* also lay down more or less the same conditions to their studies. The most significant enforcement of these conditions, perhaps, is instanced in the story of Indra and Virochana in the *Chhandogya* Upanishad. They went to Prajapati for a knowledge of the Atman. He made them live under the vow of Brahmacharya with necessary moral and physical disciplines for thirty-two years before he vouchsafed to them what is but a crude idea of the Atman. That teaching satisfied Virochana but not Indra who came back puzzled. He then underwent the same disciplines for thirty-two, thirty-two and five years consecutively. Only then was his intellect considered fit to comprehend the truths of the Atman.

But what strange and unnecessarily rigorous conditions these for a merely intellectual comprehension of the Vedantic doctrines! Perhaps it will be said that it was not for a purely philosophical understanding of the Vedantic truths that these conditions were imposed, but for their actual realisation and experience in life. That may be so. For our philosophers did not usually differentiate between the spirit of religion, i.e., actual realisation and of philosophy or intellectual comprehension, and a philosophical enquiry uninspired by a passionate longing for Reality and Truth was to them a strange thing. But that those rigorous conditions were insisted on even in cases of intellectual enquiry is clear from Sankara's interpretation of the first word (*Atha*) of the first aphorism of the *Brahma-Sutras* which it must be granted is a purely intellectual treatise. Sankara says, "It therefore is requisite that something should



be stated subsequent to which the enquiry into Brahman is proposed.—Well, then, we maintain that the antecedent conditions are the discrimination of what is eternal and what is non-eternal ; the renunciation of all desire to enjoy the fruit of one's actions both here and hereafter ; the acquirement of tranquillity, self-restraint, and the other means, and the desire for final release." Even an intellectual pursuit of Truth was considered invalid and unprofitable on the part of one who has not purified himself previously by going through the fire of the stated disciplines.

It is no wonder that they should appear needless or excessive to the modern sense. Philosophical enquiry, as we understand it at the present times, is unfettered by conditions. It has to be undertaken with an unbiased and "unconditioned" mind. Practice can follow from a previous ascertainment of the nature of Truth and Reality. Until the truth of life and reality has been intellectually comprehended, it is absurd to take up a course of discipline for its experience and realisation, for there is nothing to tell us that the discipline will lead us up the correct path. But the Vedantic philosophers seem to have reversed the natural process: according to them, the discipline comes first, and next the ascertainment of Truth. It is worth while to enquire into their meaning.

Let us see what others have got to say on the point. Prof. Paul Deussen discusses the conditions in details in his *The System of the Vedanta* and observes in reference to "the group of six attributes" such as calmness or tranquillity etc. : "Neither of these will fit the picture that we form of the true philosopher to-day. In contrast to the Stoic sages,.....we imagine the philosophic genius rather as a profoundly excitable, nay, even passionate nature ; and, in spite of all concentration and meditation, we demand from him, as from the empiric investigator, a full interest in the visible world and its wonderful phenomena, only that he must see them with other eyes than the empiric . . . . . And just as little will the requirement demanded from the pupil under No. 6 (i.e., *Shraddhā* or faith) command itself to us, since we have learnt from Descartes, that the beginning of wisdom consists in this, *de omnibus dubitare*."

Prof. Max Müller, however, controverts this argument of Prof. Deussen. "It has been thought," he says in defence of the Vedantic philosophers, "that this quietness is hardly the best outfit for a philosopher, who, according to our views of



philosophy, is to pile Ossa on Pelion in order to storm the fortress of truth and to conquer new realms in earth and heaven. But we must remember that the object of the Vedānta was to show that we have really nothing to conquer but ourselves, that we possess everything within us, and that nothing is required but to shut our eyes and our hearts against the illusion of the world in order to find ourselves richer than heaven and earth. Even faith, *śraddhā*, which has given special offence as a requisite for philosophy, because philosophy, according to Descartes, ought to begin with *de omnibus dubitare*, has its legitimate place in the Vedānta philosophy, for, like Kant's philosophy, it leads us on to see that many things are beyond the limits of human understanding, and must be accepted or believed, without being understood."

In our opinion, this defence of Prof. Max Müller rather lets down the Vedantists, making them appear as dogmatists. A philosophy prefaced with a fixed and stereotyped temperamental outlook is as bad as one based on assumed data or dogmas. Our temperament affects considerably our determination and evaluation of truth. A judicial attitude, neutral and unbiased, is safest and most correct for a proper appreciation of reality. If the student of philosophy begins his philosophical enquiry with a prepared and moulded mind as a result of disciplines, he starts with a handicap and can but have a sectional view of truth; his mind is unable to appreciate other viewpoints and his inferences will necessarily be faulty.

Apart from this difference, however, both Prof. Deussen and Max Müller endorse the wisdom and efficacy of these conditions. They look upon them more as a moral preparation than strictly philosophical and consider it as a fine preliminary to Vedantic enquiry. "The sea must no longer be swept by storms, if it is to reflect the light of the sun in all its divine calmness and purity." Besides, they consider that the Vedānta is not a philosophy in the accepted sense but is a mixture of religion and philosophy and is therefore justified in insisting on a preparatory moral discipline. But the question is: Do we by submitting to this discipline really prepare the mind "to reflect the light of the sun in all its divine calmness or purity" or only twist it into a misshapen mirror in which everything is reflected awry and grotesque? For there are those who hold that the stoic discipline and renunciation of the world lead us



away from the real and the true. How can the beginner judge which view is true? And would it not be prejudicing his mind and clouding the issue for him to insist on his submission to the Vedantic conditions?

In our opinion the significance of the formulation of these conditions lies deeper than has been conceived by either Prof. Deussen or Prof. Max Müller. It is for a moral preparation no doubt, but that is only a secondary consideration. *The main object is the perfection and purification of the faculty of reason and perception.* None would deny that a perfect reason is an indispensable requisite of a student of philosophy. Without excellent reasoning powers, the study of philosophy, especially a philosophy so subtle as the Vedanta, is a fool's errand. The teachers of Vedanta, therefore, being true philosophers, insisted on the fulfilment of this essential condition and prescribed the moral disciplines as a means to that end. The only difference between them and the modern teachers of philosophy is that the latter tacitly accept the condition as fulfilled whereas the former considered it too important to accept it so without taking the students through a period of watchful probation.

*We hold that without moral perfection, that is to say, without the fulfilment of the conditions laid down by the Vedanta philosophy, one cannot acquire perfect reasoning powers.* Character and true reasoning are indissolubly connected. All those who have influenced mankind profoundly with their philosophies have been saints, men of perfect character. Clever people there are and intellectual giants whose moral life would scarcely bear scrutiny. But their greatness is partial; their powers shine within limitations; and when they are philosophers, their conclusions are often characterised by defective vision, discerning in certain points but failing miserably in others. They cannot grasp the totality of truth and reality. One who aspires to know the Highest Truth, the All and the Whole, cannot proceed with a defective reason. He must be endowed with perfect reasoning powers.

Now what is the greatest impediment to perfect reasoning? Prejudice, bias or preconception. Reason requires that nothing should be accepted as true and real without proof. Descartes was perfectly justified in considering universal scepticism as the starting point of philosophy. But he forgot that along with scepticism there must also be a perfect instrument of thought,



a perfect reasoning faculty. The mind must be freed from all bias, and that is not an easy task. Are we not taking everything on trust? Does the world exist? Have we a body? Are things real? Are the thousand desires that torment us momentarily worth anything? We cannot say, "Yes," nor can we say, "No." The answer is not so evident as it would seem. We cannot grasp truth and reality. We see darkling as through a haze which distorts the dimensions of things,—everything is twisted, oblique and deformed. Even when the mist seems to clear off for a moment, we cannot retain the true vision. Reason, the guide and watch of the mind, is itself entangled and paralysed. Its voice is too feeble, it cannot command the mind with authority and certitude. What has made the mind and the reason so terribly inane? The wise answer: "Desires."

A good part, if not the whole, of what we call our universe, is concerned with and fundamentally related to the smiles and tears of our dear ones. This vast solid world is based on our love for a few puny human beings—wife or husband, parents or children. We would feel the truth of it if *all* our dear ones were to leave us and we had no objects of attachment. The standards of value with which we determine and judge reality and truth are flimsy creations of our changing mind. Do you really know even this visible world? We know only men—our understanding is essentially anthropomorphic—and of men, clearly, only a few. And the worlds of animals, plants and the inanimate exist merely as a background to those all-important few. That is our universe. Even the sense-knowledge of it is so imperfect and foolish! India's philosophers knew that not only all secondary, but even primary qualities are subjective, and the subject weaves its universe in strangely whimsical patterns and not at all in the calm, rational fashion we fondly imagine. Our universe revolves round one or two human beings, and they are the concrete forms of our desires.

We are not writing in an imaginative vein. Any one can test and find the truth of our statement. The Knowing Ones have traced all desires to two arch passions: that of sex and of possession. These two are dominating the mind in variegated forms and are the ultimate foundation of the world of phenomena in all their gross and subtle aspects. Annihilate them and the world will vanish away. And of them again, the idea of sex



is deeper and more fundamental. The "vital clan" in the last analysis is but the sex impulse.\* The story of creation often found in the Upanishads that the Absolute Being in the beginning divided itself into a male and a female is not wholly allegorical. It is almost a literal version of an actual fact. Therefore the human soul ever seeks for a mate and runs thus seeking from birth to death and death to birth. Our whole life is entangled in the forms in which this primal impulse seeks manifold realisation. Those forms are the most real to us. All other things we judge by their standard. Things never appear to us in their true value or as they are in themselves. Therefore the sex impulse, above all, has to be curbed and crushed.

Therefore desires must be eradicated, desires that create false values, cloud our perception of things and paralyse our reason. By destroying desires, we perceive clearly and correctly, and reason functions properly. This has been the experience of all who have conquered their desires. Even a partial conquest of them revolutionises our perception of things. The present relations of things change totally; the so-called real become unreal; the phenomenal world seems emptied of its substance,—it appears chimerical; and a vaster, more durable, finer and spiritual reality emerges triumphant. Is it not then absurd to hope to comprehend the truths of life and reality with such a defective instrument of knowledge as our mind and reason in its present state is? Must not we first purify and emancipate reason? Now it sees and conceives everything in a crooked and twisted form and out of its true bearings. It is dominated by false standards of value. It is too gross to soar into the ethereal regions of philosophical truths and too weak to retain its finds. Suppose reason conceives this world and life to be unreal. Will not our carnality laugh it to confusion? Clearing the mind of mere superficial *idols*, false opinions and prejudices, avails little. More pernicious and vitiating *idols* are desires. By their destruction we gain true freedom of reason and real philosophical outlook.

We may here conceive of an objection. It may be argued that the eradication of desires really abnegates life and is therefore unreal, abnormal and unnatural; and that it makes us

\* Here sex implies not merely its crude, carnal manifestations, but also its deep, subtle aspects.



in fact less fit to comprehend reality inasmuch as it takes us away from it. But is not the very fact that desires are destructible—for they *are* destructible, as has been exemplified by repeated experience—a proof of their irrationality? Whatever is rational is essential to Truth and Reality and cannot be destroyed. Inessentials are but idle notions and therefore destructible. Therefore reason must be emancipated from its predilections, its irrational bias, by striking at their very roots—the desires from which they spring. Only reason thus freed can comprehend things in their true forms and relations, and be fit for philosophical enquiry.

If we examine the conditions laid down by Vedanta as preliminary to its study, we shall find that they are all calculated to confer that freedom on the mind and reason. From the different Vedantic treatises we find the conditions to be “the four Sadhanas,” Sannyasa and Brahmacharya. The first of the four Sadhanas, the discrimination of the Real and the unreal, is only another form of “universal scepticism.” It requires that we should question the reality of the phenomenal world and reject whatever is found unreal. But it must not be superficial or a mere make-believe, for that is worthless and takes us nowhere. It should profoundly mould our life, behaviour and consciousness: we must learn to look upon, feel and treat the unreal as unreal. That is what the second Sadhana, the renunciation of the fruits of actions, implies; for a hankering for the delectable fruits of earth and heaven ill assorts with the consciousness of their unreality. Therefore all desires for enjoyment at present or in future must be given up. The third, the acquirement of the six qualities, such as calmness, etc., prevents the mind from going to and dwelling on the sense-objects as real. And the fourth, the desire for freedom, concentrates the scattered forces of the mind and makes them flow in one impetuous current to the search and discovery of the Real. These four together constitute Sannyasa. Only when the mind has been freed from the vitiating assumption of the reality of the world and devoted to the search of truth, is one fit for Sannyasa. world and devote to the search of truth, is one fit for Sannyasa. But without Brahmacharya, continence, none of them are possible or of any avail. It not only perfects the brain and the nervous system and strengthens them to bear the tremendous



strain of sustained and powerful thought, but what is more important, it frees the mind of the sex idea, the more potent of the twin factors of Maya or Primal Ignorance, which, as we have stated before, clouds the knowledge of things, ensnares reason, and conjures fantastic illusions for the soul to dream through the succession of births. We thus find that they all tend to cure the mind of its irrational predilections, set the reason free and make their perception and vision clear and pure.

Vedanta aims at the highest truth which is necessarily revolutionary in character and influence. The mind that will discover and know it must be extraordinarily strong and free. It must pass through the fire of an austere discipline to be purged of its impurities. Not all can be philosophers. Not all are fit to know the truth. Many aspire, but few, very few, attain. And that they may not despair, let them fulfil the preliminary conditions faithfully. And then to their emancipated reason and mind, the mysteries of life and the world will no more be mysterious, for their perception and inference will be free from the errors of the common man and will always be true and correct.

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY NAGENDRANATH GUPTA

*(Continued from page 122)*

Another experience that Swami Vivekananda related to me bordered on the tragic. The particular vow he had undertaken at that time was that he should steadily walk the whole day without either looking back or begging from any man. He was to halt only if accosted and to accept food if it was offered to him unasked. Sometimes he had to go without any food for twenty-four and even forty-eight hours. One afternoon about sunset he was passing in front of a stable belonging to some wealthy person. One of the grooms was standing on the road. Vivekananda had had nothing to eat for two days and was looking weak and weary. The groom saluted him and looking at him asked, "Sadhu Baba, have you eaten anything to-day?" "No," replied Vivekananda, "I have eaten nothing." The groom took him into the stable, offered him water to wash his hands and feet and placed his own food consisting of some *chapatis* and a little chutney, before him. The chutney was hot but in the course of his wanderings Vivekananda had got accustomed to eat chillies, which were often the only condiment he had with his food.



I have seen him eating a handful of pungent, green chillies with evident relish. Vivekananda ate the *chapatis* and the chutney, but immediately afterwards felt a frightful burning sensation in his stomach and rolled on the ground in agony. The groom beat his head with his hands and wailed, "What have I done? I have killed a Sadhu." The pain must have been due to eating the chutney on an empty stomach. Just about this time a man with a basket on his head happened to be passing and halted on hearing the cries of the groom. Vivekananda asked him what he had in his basket and the man replied it was tamarind. "Ah, that is just what I want," said Vivekananda, and taking some of the tamarind he mixed it with water and drank it. This had the effect of allaying the burning sensation and the pain, and after resting for a while Vivekananda resumed his journey.

In the remote regions of the Himalayas Vivekananda met with some perilous adventures, but nothing daunted him and he went through the treadmill of discipline with high courage and tireless energy. The vows imposed upon him entailed prolonged trials of endurance, an unbroken course of self-discipline, meditation and communion. When he arrived in America, without friends, without funds, he had nothing beyond his intellectual and spiritual equipment, and the indomitable courage and will that he had acquired in the course of his purposeful wanderings in India. One of his own countrymen, who had attained some fame and was a man of considerable eminence, attempted to discredit him by circulating unfounded calumnies against him. In spite of difficulties Vivekananda found his way to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago and it was there that recognition came to him. He was probably the youngest man in that memorable and historical as well as unique gathering. Beyond the fact that he was a Hindu he carried no other credentials. The name of his Guru was unknown in Europe and America. He was an obscure young man unknown to fame, with no reputation either in his own country or out of it for scholarship, holy living, or leadership. It is impossible to conceive an assembly more critical or less emotional than that gathering of learned and pious men from all parts of the world representing all the churches and creeds of the world. Men of great erudition steeped in sacred lore, reverend and high dignitaries of many churches, men who had left the seclusion of the cloister and the peace of the monastery had met in solemn conclave in a great city in the Far West. It was a Parliament not filled from the hustings and polling booths, but from the temples and pagodas, the synagogues and churches and mosques of the world. They were mostly men well advanced in life, accustomed by years of discipline to self-control, engaged in contemplation and meditation, and not likely to be lightly swayed by extraneous influences. Some of them were men of an international reputation, all of them were men of distinction. Obviously the least among them was this youthful stranger from the East, of whom no one had ever heard and who was probably there more by sufferance than by the right of any achievement to his credit. How he carried that grave assembly of religious men by storm, how pen-pictures of the young Hindu monk in the orange-coloured robe and turban filled the newspapers of America, and



how the men and women of America crowded to see and hear him are now part of history. Slightly varying Cæsar's laconic and exultant message it may be truthfully said of Swami Vivekananda, he went, he was seen and heard, and he conquered. By a single bound as it were he reached from the depth of obscurity to the pinnacle of fame. Is it not remarkable, is it not significant, that of all the distinguished and famous men present at the Parliament of Religions only one name is remembered to-day and that is the name of Vivekananda? There was, in sober fact, no other man like him in that assembly, composed though it was of distinguished representatives of all religions. Young in years the Hindu monk had been disciplined with a thoroughness and severity beyond the experience of the other men who had foregathered at the Parliament of Religions. He had had the inestimable advantage of having sat at the feet of a Teacher the like of whom had not been seen in the world for many centuries. He had known poverty and hunger, and had moved among and sympathised with the poorest people in India, one of the poorest countries in the world. He had drunk deep at the perennial fountain of the wisdom of the ancient Aryan Rishis and he was endowed with a courage which faced the world undismayed. When his voice rang out as a clarion in the Parliament of Religions slow pulses quickened and thoughtful eyes brightened, for through him spoke voices that had long been silent but never stilled, and which awoke again to resonant life. Who in that assembly of the wise held higher credentials than this youthful monk from India with his commanding figure, strong, handsome face, large, flashing eyes, and the full voice with its deep cadences? In him was manifested the rejuvenescence of the wisdom and strength of ancient India, and the wide tolerance and sympathy characteristic of the ancient Aryans. The force and fire in him flashed out at every turn, and dominated and filled with amazement the people around him.

Other men from India had preceded him in the mission from the East to the West,, men of culture, men of eloquence and religious convictions, but no other man created the profound impression that he did. These others assumed a tone which was either apologetic, or deferential to the superiority of the West to the East. Some said they had come to learn and did not presume to teach and all were more or less overawed by the dazzling magnificence of western civilisation. But Swami Vivekananda never had any doubts or misgivings and he knew he came from a land which had produced most of the great and wise teachers of men. The glitter of the West held no lure for him and his voice never lost the ring of authority. Besides the people anxious to profit by his teachings there was a good deal of promiscuous admiration. There was the usual sheaf of romantic letters from gushing and impressionable young women, and well meant offers of service from many quarters. A dentist offered to clean his teeth free of charge whenever necessary. A manicure presented him with a set of his dainty instruments for which an Indian monk has no use. A more substantial offer was about a lecturing tour with a well filled purse of shining dollars at the end of the tour. The money would have been useful for the monasteries afterwards established by Swami Vivekananda, but his vows precluded him



from either earning or laying by any money.\* Besides the open lectures that he delivered in America and England he held what may be called informal classes attended by a small number of select people, usually earnest inquirers or people anxious to learn what the Swami had to teach. The actual number of his disciples in those countries was not large, but he set many people thinking while his marvellous personality made itself felt wherever he went.

Swami Vivekananda had left India an obscure and unknown young man. On his return he was preceded by the fame he had won in America and England, and was acclaimed everywhere as an apostle and leader of the ancient Aryan faith. At Madras he was given an enthusiastic reception. Some of the organizers of his public reception at Calcutta thoughtfully sent him a bill of costs. Swami Vivekananda mentioned this incident to me with indignation. "What have I to do with any reception?" he told me. "These people fancied I have brought a great deal of money from America to be spent on demonstrations in my honour. Do they take me for a showman or a charlatan?" He felt humiliated as well as indignant. On his return to India earnest young men came to him to join the Ramkrishna Mission founded by him. They took the vows of celibacy and poverty, and they have established monasteries in various parts of India. There are some in America also so that Swami Vivekananda's work in that part of the world is still carried on and his memory is held in great reverence. Swami Vivekananda told me that the Paramhansa insisted on celibacy and moral purity as the essence of self-discipline, and this is equally noticeable among Swami Vivekananda's disciples and those who have joined the Brotherhood after his passing. Every member of the Ramkrishna Mission is pure of heart and pure in life, cultured and scholarly, and is engaged in serving his fellow-men to the best of his ability, and the community is the gainer by their example and their selfless and silent service.

The last time I had met Swami Vivekananda before he left for the United States was in 1886. I happened to be in Calcutta on a brief visit and one afternoon I received intimation that Paramhansa Ramkrishna had passed into the final and eternal *samadhi*. I drove immediately to the garden house in a northern suburb of Calcutta where the Paramhansa had passed his last days on earth. He was lying on a clean white bed in front of the portico of the house, while the disciples, Vivekananda among them with his eyes veiled with unshed tears, and some other persons were seated on the ground surrounding the bedstead. The Paramhansa was lying on his right side with the infinite peace and calm of death on his features. There was peace all around, in the silent trees and the waning afternoon, in the azure of the sky above with a few clouds passing overhead in silence. And as we sat in reverent silence, hushed in the presence of death, a few large drops of rain fell. This was the *pushpa-vrishti*, or rain of flowers of which the ancient Aryans wrote, the liquid flowers showered down by the gods

\* But he actually accepted the monetary offer of a lecture bureau and delivered lectures under it for some time in different cities of U. S. A. — Editor.



as an offering of homage to the passing of some chosen mortal to rank thenceforth among the immortals. It was a high privilege to have seen Ramkrishna Paramhansa in life and also to have looked upon the serenity of his face in death.

It was not till eleven years later in 1897 that I met Vivekananda again. He was then famous alike in the East and the West. He had travelled largely, seen many countries and many peoples. I was at Lahore and I heard he was staying at the hill station of Dharamsala. Later on he went on to Jammu in Kashmir territory and next came down to Lahore. There was to be a demonstration and a house had been engaged for him. At the railway station when the train came in I noticed an English military officer alighting from a first class compartment and holding the door respectfully open for some one else, and the next second out stepped Swami Vivekananda on the platform. The officer was about to move away after bowing to the Swami, but Vivekananda cordially shook hands with him and spoke one or two parting words. On inquiry Vivekananda told me that he did not know the officer personally. After entering the compartment he had informed Swami Vivekananda that he had heard some of the Swami's discourses in England and that he was a colonel in the Indian Army. Vivekananda had travelled first class because the people at Jammu had bought him a first class ticket. The same night Vivekananda came away to my house with two of his disciples. That night and the following nights and during the day whenever I was free we talked for long hours, and what struck me most was the intensity of Vivekananda's feelings and his passionate devotion to the cause of his country. There was a perfect blending of his spiritual fervour with his intellectual keenness. He had grappled with many problems and had found a solution for most of them, and he had in an unusual degree the prophetic vision. "The middle classes in India," he said, "are a spent force. They have not got the stamina for a resolute and sustained endeavour. The future of India rests with the masses." One afternoon he slowly came up to me with a thoughtful expression on his face, and said, "If it would help the country in any way I am quite prepared to go to prison." I looked at him and wondered. Instead of making the remotest reference to the laurels still green upon his brow he was wistfully thinking of life in prison as a consummation to be wished, a service whereby his country might win some small profit. He was not bidding for the martyr's crown, for any sort of pose was utterly foreign to his nature, but his thoughts were undoubtedly tending towards finding redemption for his country through suffering. No one had then heard of Non-co-operation or Civil Disobedience, and yet Vivekananda, who had nothing to do with politics, was standing in the shadow of events still long in coming. His visit to Japan had filled him with enthusiastic admiration for the patriotism of the Japanese nation. "Their country is their religion," he would declare, his face aglow with enthusiasm. "The national cry is *Dai Nippon, Banzai!* Live long, great Japan! The country before and above everything else. No sacrifice is too great for maintaining the honour and integrity of the country."

One evening Vivekananda and myself were invited to dinner by a



Punjabi gentleman (the late Bakshi Jaishi Ram), who had met Vivekananda at Dharamsala, a hill station in the Punjab. Vivekananda was offered a new and handsome *hookah* to smoke. Before doing so he told his host, "If you have any prejudices of caste you should not offer me your *hookah*, because if a sweeper were to offer me his *hookah* to-morrow I would smoke it with pleasure for I am outside the pale of caste." His host courteously replied that he would feel honoured if Swamiji would smoke his *hookah*. The problem of untouchability had been solved for Swami Vivekananda during his wanderings in India. He had eaten the food of the poorest and humblest people whom no eastman would condescend to touch, and he had accepted their hospitality with thankfulness. And yet Swami Vivekananda was by no means a meek man. In the course of his lecture on the Vedanta at Lahore, one of the loftiest of his utterances, he declared with head uplifted and nostrils dilated, "I am one of the proudest men living." It was not pride of the usual worthless variety but the noble pride of the consciousness of a great heritage, a revulsion of feeling against the false humility that had brought his country and his people so low.

I met Goodwin, the young Englishman who at one time was on the high road to become a wastrel, but fortunately came under Vivekananda's influence and became one of his staunchest and most devoted followers. Goodwin was a fast and accurate stenographer and most of Vivekananda's lectures were reported by him. He was simple as a child and wonderfully responsive to the slightest show of kindness. Later on I met some of the lady disciples of Swami Vivekananda, Mrs. Ole Bull, Miss MacLeod, and Miss Margaret Noble, the gifted young Englishwoman to whom Vivekananda had given the beautifully appropriate name of Nivedita, the Obedient One, one dedicated and consecrated to the service of India. I first met Sister Nivedita at Srinagar in Kashmir and next at Lahore where I saw a great deal of her, and again in Calcutta where she came to my house more than once. I took her through the slums of Lahore and showed her the Ramliila, which greatly interested her. She made eager enquiries about everything relating to India. She was in splendid health when she first came out to India, but the austerities which she practised affected her health, and she rapidly spent herself and was spent in the service of India. Of her fine intellect and gift of literary expression she has left abiding evidence in her exquisite books.

In conversation Vivekananda was brilliant, illuminating, arresting. While the range of his knowledge was exceptionally wide. His country occupied a great deal of his thoughts and his conversation. His deep spiritual experiences were the bedrock of his faith and his luminous expositions are to be found in his lectures, but his patriotism was as deep as his religion. Except those who saw it few can realize the ascendancy and influence of Swami Vivekananda over his American and English disciples. Even a simple Mahomedan cook who had served Sister Nivedita and the other lady disciples at Almora was struck by it. I told me at Lahore, "The respect and the devotion which these *murshids* show the Swamiji are far greater than any *murid* (disciple) owes to his *murshid* (religious preceptor) among us." At the sight of



this Indian monk wearing a single robe and a pair of rough Indian shoes his disciples from the West, among whom were the Consul General for the United States living in Calcutta, and his wife, would rise with every mark of respect, and when he spoke he was listened to with the closest and most respectful attention. His slightest wish was a command and was carried out forthwith. And Vivekananda was always his simple and great self, unassuming, straightforward, earnest and grave. Once at Almora he was visited by a distinguished and famous Englishwoman whom he had criticised for her appearance in the role of a teacher of the Hindu religion. She wanted to know wherein she had given cause for offence. "You English people," replied Swami Vivekananda, "have taken our land. You have taken away our liberty and reduced us to a state of servility in our own homes. You are draining the country of its material resources. Not content with all this, you want to take our religion, which is all that we have left, in your keeping and to set up as teachers of our religion." His visitor earnestly explained that she was only a learner and did not presume to be a teacher. Vivekananda was mollified and afterwards presided at a lecture delivered by this lady.

The next year I met Swami Vivekananda in Kashmir, our house-boats being anchored near each other on the Jhelum. On his way back to Calcutta he was my guest for a few days at Lahore. At this time he had a prescience of early death. "I have three years more to live," he told me with perfect unconcern, "and the only thought that disturbs me is whether I shall be able to give effect to all my ideas within this period." He died almost exactly three years later. The last time I saw him was at the monastery at Belur shortly before his death. It was the anniversary of Ramkrishna Paramhansa and I saw Swami Vivekananda, when the Sankirtan (singing of hymns with music) was at its height, rolling in the dust and heaping dust on his head in a paroxysm of frenzied grief. The recent visit of the King of Belgium to the monastery at Belur was a homage to the memory of Swami Vivekananda. In the world-wide no crowned king in Europe was more innocent of blood-guiltiness than the King of Belgium, and India will gratefully bear in mind this pilgrimage of a monarch from Europe to the sacred resting place of one of the greatest sons of India. Swami Vivekananda's thoughts ranged over every phase of the future of India and he gave all that was in him to his country and to the world. The world will rank him among the prophets and princes of peace, and his message has been heard in reverence in three continents. For his countrymen he has left a priceless heritage of virility, abounding vitality and invincible strength of will. Swami Vivekananda stands on the threshold of the dawn of a new day for India, a heroic and dauntless figure, the herald and harbinger of the glorious hour when India shall, once again, sweep forward to the van of the nations.

(Concluded)



## NEO-HINDUISM

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE AT BENARES

[ IMPRESSIONS OF A VISITOR ]

It was in the winter of 1925 that I had the opportunity of visiting the Home of Service at Benares. The Home has already gained such an importance as to fall within the list of places worth visiting in this holy city and its surroundings, and visitors seem to go round the extensive area of the Home, spotted with red brick buildings, with the same interest as they do in the new Hindu University or in the ruins of the ancient Buddhist monastery at Sarnath. Pilgrims also visit the Home managed by monks and the attached monastery and shrine of Sri Ramakrishna with as much devotion as characterises their visits to the sacred temples of the holy city.

It was about 9 A.M. when I entered the institution. On entering the premises I found a pretty big crowd gathered round a gentleman seated at a table on the veranda of a fairly large building -- a block by itself. I

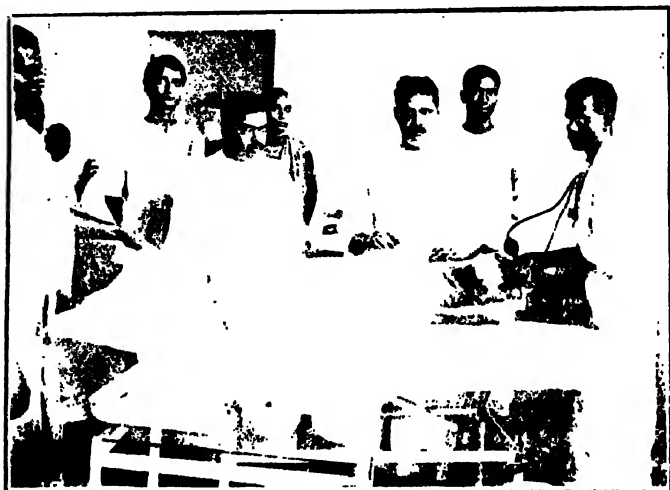


The Outdoor Dispensary

learnt afterwards that the gentleman was the doctor attending to the outdoor patients at the dispensaries of the Home of Service. On advancing a little further in the same building I came to the offices, and at the doorway I was greeted by a young man in ochre robes and with shaven head, evidently a monk, who welcomed me cordially. "Can I help you in any way?" asked the young man, and I replied, "Yes, I would like to see the institution, if your rules permit it and if it is not causing you



any inconvenience." "You are quite welcome to see it," said the young monk and took me round the whole institution. We first entered the outdoor dispensaries which consisted of two big rooms situated in the same building next to the offices. All the three systems, Allopathic, Homeopathic and Ayurvedic, are followed here according to needs. About 40,000 cases had been treated here that year upto the time of my visit.



An Operation

We next entered the operation room, neat, clean and well-equipped, where two doctors and two monks were quite busy attending to cases. It was already late in the morning, yet the number waiting patiently for their turn was pretty large, which showed that the monks and the doctors had quite a heavy time of it. From there we went to the indoor hospitals, small blocks each containing four to six beds, standing on well laid grounds, bedecked with beautiful flower beds which did great credit to the taste and consideration of the Home authorities. The sight of the variously coloured chrysanthemums and roses was fascinating, and one could hardly suspect the great misery which was being so devotedly attended to and alleviated beside these feasts of smell and colour. The wards were extremely neat and clean and absolutely sanitary. The segregation wards for infectious diseases are kept apart at some distance from the main hospital wards. The simplicity and perfect orderliness of the buildings covering the extensive area of the Home indicating Hindu charity in a variety of ways, cannot but appeal to any one who visits it.

I found the wards quite full and some of the patients suffering from acute diseases, who would certainly have died for want of proper care had not timely help been given by the Home. A good number of these patients, I heard from my guide, were picked up from the road-side by



the workers of the Home who go daily round the city with this express object. I was particularly struck by the happiness in the faces of the unfortunate inmates, which showed that they get full attention and utmost care. I could not talk to them as they did not understand my language, but their looks seemed to thankfully acknowledge the benefits they received at the Home. The diet sheet showed that it was sufficient and nutritious, and the beds were quite comfortable and clean. There were



the Servants of the Mother Home, the Operation Theatre

well about a hundred and twenty patients, and I found the workers, all monastic, attending to their every comfort cheerfully and lovingly, though some of the patients were suffering from unclean diseases. Some of the workers were actually grappling with death to rescue the unhappy patients from its grim clutches. A good majority of the workers, I learnt, are English-educated, and some of them have the highest university qualifications, and all of them are cultured gentlemen, their only reward lying in their own inward satisfaction. Seeing them one is reminded of the verse :

न त्वहं कामये राज्यं न स्वर्गं नाऽपुनर्भवम् ।  
कामये दुःखतप्तानां प्राणिनाम् आर्त्तिनाशनम् ॥

"I do not covet earthly kingdom or heaven or even salvation. I desire for the removal of the miseries of the afflicted." The doctors and workers all serve out of love and devotion, and the menials alone are paid.

The Home maintains besides these hospitals a refuge, a block by itself, which can accommodate twenty-five invalids. The operation theatre is a finely fitted up-to-date room where all aseptic cases are operated. I was informed that during that year there were about two hundred such cases operated in this theatre. Hard by there was another building under



construction which was intended to be a surgical ward. All the wards are gifts made by the rich people of the country, who built them in memory of some dear departed relations or friends, and their names are engraved in tablets fixed in the walls of the buildings.

The women's department of the Home has a compound for itself. We had to wait for the permission of the lady superintendent in charge of the department before we entered it. Of course I could not enter any of the wards. This department has a girls' home attached to it where orphan and helpless girls and widows are accommodated and given an education and training which fit them fully to meet the practical conditions of life or the life of service in the Home itself. The authorities were



The Women's Department

contemplating at the time of my visit to establish a school for the training of nurses, which would no doubt serve a very useful purpose. For this as also for building a refuge for women which was at the time situated elsewhere, they had applied to the Government for the acquisition of the adjacent lands. All these however do not exhaust the activities of the Home. It has also its outdoor works, e.g., distribution of rice in weekly doles to poor but respectable families, occasional help to urgent cases of students or stranded travellers etc., distribution of warm clothings etc.

I was everywhere impressed by the earnestness of the workers which clearly pointed to the deep religious consciousness that lay behind their untiring energy and devotion. The Home was about to complete its twenty-fifth year, having been started in the year 1900 by a few young men. The beginning was with an old woman of eighty whom they found lying very ill and in sad plight by the road-side exposed to the inclemency



of weather. With a four anna bit secured by begging they began their work of love and were filled with a great peace and happiness when the old lady was brought back to health. This formed the nucleus of the Home. They continued their work of service and formed themselves into a brotherhood of mercy. They started an association called the Poor Men's Relief Association which name was changed for the present one when it was transferred to the Ramakrishna Mission, the young men themselves becoming the followers of Swami Vivekananda and monks of the order founded by him. I was told by my guide that the name "Relief Association" was particularly objected to by the Swami who preferred the word "service" to "relief" and had it accordingly changed to "Home of Service." "Do not march in false colours," he said to the young men. "Let service to humanity, and not pity or charity, be your ideal."

Thus with the slight help begged of an unknown gentleman and the blessings of a sick and neglected old woman nursed back to health and



Swami Shubhananda. Charu Bala

life, was the institution ushered into existence; and ever since the Home has been making steady progress from year to year through trials, vicissitudes and opposition inevitable in all new enterprises and great works in every land and especially in India. I had the opportunity of seeing Swami Shubhananda who, more than any one else, was responsible for the organisation and the progress of the Home; not a striking personality by any means, frail and short of stature, very shy and humble, but with an austere and ascetic look about him, quite a typical monk. When later on I came in closer contact with him I was deeply impressed by the sweetness of his profound nature, full of love and compassion. Yet he was a man of strong principles. He was a devotee above all, full of an

tense faith which had sustained him in the darkest and most anxious days of the Home, for he knew that it was the Lord's work and that he need not worry so long as he was perfect in the discharge of his duties. It was the efforts of this single man to which is mainly due the present prosperity of the Home which can now count among its property an extensive ground dotted over with buildings accommodating one hundred and twenty patients in its indoor hospitals, a refuge for invalids,



offices, dispensaries, an operation theatre, workers' quarters, doctors' quarters etc., a separate women's department with a girls' home attached to it, the whole valued at several lacs of rupees (to make only an estimation of the material value of the work apart from its spiritual aspect) -- a practical demonstration of what sincerity of purpose and steadfastness can do.

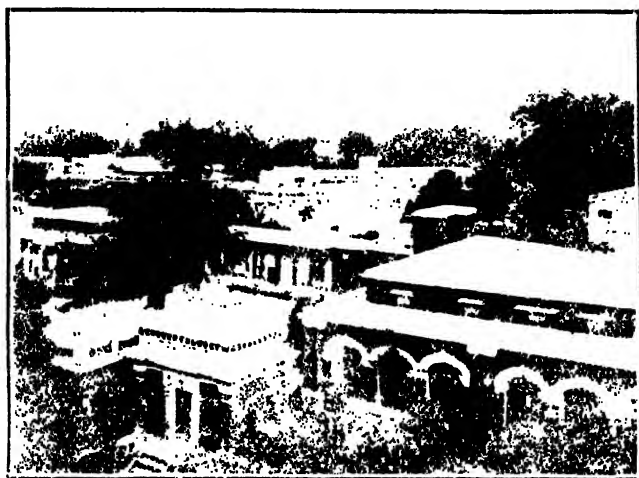
Benares is no doubt famous for its charity. But even there an institution like the Home is an urgent necessity. For the Home has provision, unlike other charity houses in that city, for the diseased, women, non-Brahmins and the respectable poor. The *chhatras* are narrowly orthodox and do not do anything for non-Brahmins, the sick and women; and the authorities of the city hospitals do not go about the town in search of the sick and the helpless as do the workers of the Home. The work of the Home is based on the broadest principles of universal brotherhood and everyone is served here irrespective of his or her caste, creed or colour. No difference is made even in the case of the so-called untouchables.

What is more significant is the spirit that prompts the workers of the Home in this disinterested, but arduous work. It is neither philanthropy nor charity. Here charity has been metamorphosed into worship. They serve the poor and the diseased in the spirit of worship. It is a temple where God is being worshipped through service to men. For Hinduism teaches that behind everything, even the least, is God who is the one Reality in the universe and therefore there should be no difference between the service of men and the worship of God. All difference between human and Divine vanishes. Any work, provided it is inspired by this spirit, is as good a means to salvation as the contemplative life which is generally regarded as the religious life *par excellence*. The motto of the workers is *ātmano mokṣārtham jagaddhitāya cha*. "For one's own salvation and for the good of the world." Thus does the Home stand for the highest ideal of the country, renunciation. But by renunciation it does not mean living away from the terrors and sufferings of the world but *amidst* them and conquering them. "To renounce is to conquer and to have and hold is as great as to give up." In this way has religion been brought once more from the forest retreats into the every-day life of men.

In these days when religion has degenerated into mere formalities and ceremonials, the call for a return to its fundamentals, especially to the gospel of work, which the Home is silently sending to the nation, should not be light-heartedly ignored. Its spirit of helpfulness and its catholicity of outlook which have brought men of diverse castes, creeds and provinces together and are breaking down the walls of caste rigours, provincialism and sectarian hatred by withdrawing the vision of men from the trivialities of the world to the Divinity shining in everyone, are unique. It is a happy thing that the Home of Service is situated in the vicinity of many educational institutions, specially the Hindu University which is not so far off as to be beyond its moral influence. The Home teaches as eloquently as a professor, though not in words. The sensitive and impressionable young



minds are easily affected by everything attractive, whether good or bad. The Home is no doubt exerting a silent, healthy influence on those young minds, inspiring them with the idea of a noble life of sacrifice and service to the country.



A Bird's-eye View of the Home of Service

The modern age has done marvels in the sphere of natural sciences. But it has allowed itself to be too long dominated by them with the consequence that high thinking and spiritual ambitions of men have been oppressed. The abnormal growth of science on the one hand and stagnation of religion on the other have resulted in the spread of materialism. What cannot be proved scientifically is thrown out as useless, though it is capable of giving peace and happiness to thousands of our fellow-men who do require them for their growth. And we have thus a wide gulf created between the educated higher classes and the masses, with menacing consequences. But the spiritual instincts of man cannot be suppressed or long. His inner nature must expand. He demands free scope to soar high. He resents control. Truth and knowledge are hailed by him so long as this freedom is not checked. He likes to supplement his world of every day reality by an ideal world where the highest and the noblest parts of his mind may find play. If he is chained to the senses and the intellect as science seeks to do, he revolts and seeks shelter in worst kinds of superstitions such as worship of ghosts and spirits or some other like absurdities, as substitutes for the worship of God, Krishna, Buddha or Christ. Signs of such a revulsion are not wanting in the present times though they are not quite prominent. But such a state of things is fraught with a danger to the progress of mankind greater than the proposed danger from the current religions of the world against which



modern knowledge is carrying on warfare. Or it may be that if things take a good turn when religions are thrown out as unscientific, an altruistic ideal will be set up in their place. In that case, the Christ's sermon on the mount and the Buddha's first discourse near Benares which gave a new light to mankind and changed their view-point from the external world to the internal, would lose all their significance. But probably they will leave behind before they are discarded a profound influence which would give rise to a cult of humanity, more or less loosely connected with the original ideas of the New Testament or the Tripitakas.

Already the churches in all countries have changed their attitude with regard to social questions, and the relief of the poor and the masses has been made a regular item of their programme, and even the enemies of religion seem to be staunch upholders of this movement. To rescue children from vice and give them moral and secular education, to clothe, feed and nurse the hungry, the sick and the distressed have occupied the anxious thought of the enlightened in all countries. The goal of human progress is fixed as the social perfection of man. Man's duty is to subordinate his personality to society and to live for others. Humanity is the one object of his worship. The ideal of God is replaced by an abstract idea of humanity. Such a movement however is different from what we are accustomed to call religion. Everything granted, it still remains unproved why we should be sympathetic, why we should serve others and love them, and last of all, what is really *good* for the world. We cannot get much by merely advocating self-sacrifice and love, unless we back it by an idealistic principle.

In this world there is nothing that is purely good or purely bad. Every act is a mixture of good and evil. Utility is not absolute. And charity is often found to encourage the very evil that it seeks to eradicate. The condition of the world has not been much improved since the dawn of civilisation however much we may dream of the millennium. We have the same amount of happiness and misery, pleasure and pain, privileges and social differences to-day as in the days of the Roman or the Buddhist emperors. We have not been able to make this world happier, in spite of many great men having laid down their lives for its betterment. Good and evil disappear only to reappear under new garbs and names. If good is on the increase, so is also evil. A civilised man can enjoy more than the savage, but his capacity to suffer also has increased proportionately. Our joys are greater, so also our sorrows. Therefore utility and charity must be explained by a more fundamental philosophy which will conform both to science and human experience.

In the doctrine of the One Atman as taught in the Upanishads we have such a philosophy. It teaches the divinity of man and the fundamental identity of the individual with the universal, which puts an end to all dualism, and to all differences conceived between the human and the Divine. This philosophy is the basis of all altruism and ethics. The Home of Service, I found, has conceived altruism in the light of this Vedantic philosophy, a philosophy which, it must be confessed, is most logical and satisfactory in its solution of the problems of existence. It launches one directly into the heart of the universal. It



refers our natural feelings to a universal cause. I must love another because in so loving I love myself, for there is only one reality, the Atman. I help others not with the idea of doing good to the world and improving it, but because that is the only way for me to get out of this life of contradiction. These ideas and ideals that inspire the Home of Service are fast putting their stamp on Benares, and through Benares and her pilgrims on the Indian religious world. Only this ethical and philosophical idea, I think, with its concomitant social results can save the world and its civilisation. I hope it will in no distant time become the religion of the world.

## THE CENTRAL ASIAN INTERMEDIARIES IN THE PROPAGATION OF BUDDHISM

BY DR. PROBODH CHANDRA BAGCHI, M.A., D.Litt (Paris).

(1) THE INDO-SCYTHIANS (the *Yue tche*). The Indo-Scythians probably contributed the most to the foundation of Sino-Indian relation. The first Chinese political mission under Chang Kien was sent to the Scythian court, established at that time in the valley of the Oxus. The continual Hiung-nu (Hun) menace to the Chinese Empire compelled the Emperor to search for an ally amongst the western peoples and the powerful *Yue-tche*, the old enemies of the Huns became the first objective of political negotiation. Though the political mission did not at once succeed, a trade relation and a cultural exchange was soon established. It was towards the end of the 1st century before Christ (2 B. C.) that the Chinese ambassador Tsing Kiang received the first Buddhist text from the *Yue-tche* prince and brought it to the Chinese court and it was probably the first direct knowledge of Buddhism which the Chinese ever had.

The Scythian conquest of north-western India at about the same time brought them into direct contact with India and lead to the foundation of a great empire which soon extended from the Punjab to the valley of the Oxus and included Kasghar and Khotan and came into conflict with the Chinese supremacy in Central Asia in the middle of the first century after Christ. It had far-reaching consequences. Apart from the political and commercial consideration it greatly helped the infiltration of Indian religion and literature in Khotan in the south and Kucha and other kingdoms in the north.

The Scythians began to play a very important rôle in the history of middle Asia. Their centre of activity was transferred to the region of Gándhāra and the new capital was founded at Purusapura (Peshwar) which was already international from the times of the Greek conquest. The Scythians soon embraced Buddhism and brought a new contribution to the development of Buddhism and its expansion outside India. Kaniska who adopted the Chinese imperial title of *Devaputra* (*T'ien-tseu*) became the



patron of a new form of Buddhism, the Mahāyāna which was soon destined to be an universal religion, and to have a prosperous career in the greater part of Asia. Kaniska sat at the feet of Indian teachers like Asvaghosa who promulgated this new faith. It is not impossible that this new faith first propagated on the border lands of India, the meeting place of different civilisations, and patronised by the Indo-Scythian kings was inspired to some extent by the Indo-Scythian and other foreign peoples living side by side with the Indians.

It seems that during her first relation with China India was represented by the Indo-Scythians. The tradition would have us believe that the first Indian missionaries, Kāśyapa Mātanga and Dharmaratna, who went to China in 68 A.D., were found in the country of the Indo-Scythians when the Chinese ambassadors came to meet them. The texts which these missionaries transmitted to China were not translations of the original works of the Canon, but brief *exposé* of the fundamental doctrine of Buddhism meant for pure propaganda in foreign countries.

From this time onwards we hear of continual arrivals of Buddhist missionaries and it is not without importance that many of them were Indo-Scythian by nationality. Thus Lokaksema (or more accurately *Lokachema*), a monk of rare learning came to Lo-yang (Si-ngan-fu) in 147 A.D. and translated there some of the most important texts of the Buddhist canon into Chinese. May it be noted that the most of these texts formed a part of the Mahāyāna literature. Lokaksema worked there till 188 A.D., a very long period of work indeed, and some of his translations which are still extant testify to the amount of work which he did for the propagation of Buddhism in China. Towards the end of the same century (190-220 A.D.), one of his young disciples, named Tche K'ien who was also an Indo-Scythian by nationality, was compelled to leave North-China on account of political troubles and to migrate to the south of the Yang-tse-kiang. He worked in Nanking till the middle of the 3rd Cen. A. D. (252-253 A.D.) and translated over a hundred Buddhist texts, 49 of which are still extant. It is again to be noted that he emphasised on the new form of the religion, I mean, the Mahāyāna. Though he translated texts from the Buddhist Agamas he did not fail to translate Mahāyāna texts like *Vimalakirtinirdesa*, a scripture of capital interest to the new Church.

Tche K'ien was the first translator in South-China and was thus the first to have imparted a first-hand knowledge of Buddhism in that region.

Without confining our attention to other Indo-Scythian monks of minor importance who followed them I pass over to a great name, that of Dharmaraksa, known to the Chinese as Tchou Fa-hou. Dharmaraksa was born toward the middle of the 3rd Cen. A. D. of an Indo-Scythian family settled in Touen hoang. He received his education from an Indian teacher, travelled with him in different parts of Central Asia, and visited, without doubt some countries on the border-land of India. He then learnt 36 different languages, and came into touch with different peoples and possessed a direct knowledge of Buddhism. A monk of rare genius, he was not contented with his lot at Touen hoang. So he left for China in 284 A. D. and worked there for the cause of Buddhism till 313 A. D.



As a man of Touen hoang he possessed a thorough knowledge of the Chinese language and translated more than two hundred Sanskrit texts into Chinese of which 90 works still exist. Besides he organised a regular school of translators where Chinese, Indo-Scythian, Indians and others worked side by side for a common cause, *viz.*, the propagation of Buddhism in China.

With the disappearance of the Indo-Scythian people from the face of history, or rather their assimilation into the vast population that spread from India to the border-lands of China, the Indo-Scythian monks ceased to play any part in the history of Buddhism. But their work was commemorated by China and we can still trace their stamp on the early evangelic activities of India. We can say without exaggeration that they were the first bearers of the torch of Indian Buddhism to China.

(2) PARTHIA, Mithradates I, a very able monarch who reigned between 171-136 B. C. succeeded in extending his dominions so far that his power was felt up to the Indus and probably even to the east of that river. He annexed to his dominions the territory of all the nations between the Indus and the Hydaspes or the Jhelum. The chiefs of Taxila and Mathura assumed Persian titles of satrap and a close relation between Parthian monarchy and the Indian border-land is demonstrated by the appearance of a long line of princes of Parthian origin who now enter on the scene, and continue to play some role in the history of India till the 2nd Cen. A. D. So we have no reason to be surprised if Parthia had already possessed a direct knowledge of Buddhism in the beginning of the Christian era.

It was in the year 148 A. D. at the commencement of the War that ultimately caused the downfall of the Arsakidan dynasty that a Parthian prince appears in the western frontier country of China with a burden of Buddhist texts. He is known to the Chinese historian as Ngan-Che-Kao or Lokottama (?) the Parthian. He was a true prince of royal descent but abdicated the throne in favour of his uncle, left the family and turned out a Buddhist monk at an early age. He was a scholar of profound intelligence and gave himself up to Buddhist studies. He left for China and reached Lo-yang (Si-ngan-fu) in 144 A. D. He settled down there in the monastery of *Po-ma-sse* "the white Horse monastery" built for the first two Indian monks Dharmaratna and Kasyapa-Matanga. He soon succeeded in founding a school of translators which came to be known as 'Unrivalled'. Really it was such. Ngan-Che-Kao himself translated into Chinese more than a hundred Buddhist texts of which 55 are still extant. Most of these texts are extracts from the Buddhist Agama, generally illustrating the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism. Another Parthian named Ngan Huan who belonged to this school came to Lo-yang as a merchant. He received the imperial favour for rendering one valuable service to the public and obtained the title of the "Chief Officer of the Cavalry". But he soon gave up all official distinctions and embraced the Buddhist religion. As a scholar, he collaborated with the monks of the White Horse monastery and translated some important Buddhist texts: *The Ugraparipriccha Dvādasanidāna sutra*, etc.



Amongst the workers of the school of Ngan-Che-Kao we find some Sogdien monks and what is more interesting a Chinese priest of the end of the 2nd Cen. A.D., the first we have ever heard of, named Yen-Fo-T'iao (Buddhadeva). He was a patient collaborator of Ngan Hiuan, learnt Sanskrit (? the original language of the sacred texts brought from Central Asia) and was able to recite the whole of the *prātimoksha*. He was given the title of *Acārya* and a Sanskrit name "*Buddhadeva*" (Fo-T'iao). To the same school of Ngan-Che-Kao belonged also the famous Indo-Scythian monk Lokaksema.

It is not without significance that the first organised effort made to translate the Buddhist Canon into Chinese was made by Ngan-Che-Kao a Parthian by nationality. Buddhism was introduced into China by the Indo-Scythians and it was through them that China first came to know of India. But it was left to this great Parthian to lay the foundation of a school for a systematic interpretation of Buddhism to the Chinese and it was in that school the first Chinese *Acārya* and Sanskrit scholar received his training.

We would not mention here other Parthian monks of minor importance who went to China during 3rd and 4th Centuries A. D. But they contributed not only to the spread of Buddhism in China but also to the work of translation of the Buddhist texts, which was only possible for those who possessed an intimate knowledge of the Indian language in which they were written down.

(3) SOGDIA. Next comes Sogdia.--Another Iranian country. The Sogdians like their brethren of Parthia contributed a good deal to the spread of Buddhism towards the Far-East. In the period which we have just mentioned we find a number of Sogdian monks and amongst them some famous scholars who undertook the work of translation of the Buddhist texts into Chinese.

The Sogdians were a very ancient people. Their existence as nomads is known during the Achaemenian period of the history of Persia. The Avesta mentions the country and the people as *Sughda*. "The Sogdians were tenacious agriculturists and clever merchants. Civilised and audacious, they had occupied all the cultivable zone between the lofty mountains and the steppes to the north of the *T'ien chan*. They advanced gradually towards the eastern Turkestan and had numerous settlement in different parts of Central Asia towards the beginning of the Christian era. There was almost a Sogdian route at this time from the great wall of China up to Samarcand. The Sogdian, a purely Iranian language played the role of a sort of *lingua franca* in Central Asia for some centuries.

Without speaking of the numerous traces of Sogdian translations of Buddhist texts discovered in Central Asia, I pass over to the great Sogdian figures who have left their stamp on the Chinese Buddhist Canon. The school of Ngan-Che-Kao in the end of 2nd Cen. had already some Sogdian translators. But the most important of the Sogdian monks who worked in China is perhaps K'ang Seng-houei.

Seng-houei was born of a Sogdian family. His ancestors at first settled down in India. His father was a merchant and had to stay



Tonkin (*Kiao tche*). Seng-houei was born there in the first quarter of the 3rd Cen. A.D. On the death of his father he left the world and became a monk. He soon proceeded to Nanking where he built a monastery and founded a Buddhist school. He was the first to introduce Buddhism in Southern China. There is some truth in it. Tche Kien, the Indo-Scyth who was translating Buddhist texts in Nanking at about the same time was only an *Upasaka*, a layman. So he had no right to give ordination to the novice. Seng-houei was a perfect monk and had exercised his full rights by converting many Chinese to the new faith which he had brought to them. Seng-houei translated about a dozen Buddhist texts into Chinese and some of them have come down to us.

It is sufficient to show the great efforts which the Sogdian monks made for the spread of the Buddhist culture in China. It is not necessary here to take notice of numerous other Sogdian monks living in the Buddhist monasteries of China for several hundred years, though their contribution to the common cause should not be underestimated.

(4) KHOTAN (*Yu T'ien*), Kustana in Sanskrit.

Khotan situated on the southern route generally followed by the Chinese pilgrims on their way back from India played the same rôle as Kucha in the north in the diffusion of the Buddhist religion. The Buddhist texts discovered from Khotan show that the ancient Khotanese was an eastern Iranian language and was a highly developed vehicle of Buddhism. Being situated in the vicinity of India and accessible both from Kasmir and Afghanistan, the Khotanese population contained a large element of Indian people and the language consequently underwent a great Sanskrit influence.

According to the tradition we are lead to believe that Khotan was colonised by Indians at the time of Asoka. Whatever the value of the tradition may be, the numismatic evidences prove without doubt that Khotan received two streams of colonisation one from India and the other from China already before the middle of the 1st Cen. A. D. The connection with India is confirmed by the discovery of numerous documents written in Kharosthi characters and a Prākṛit dialect, which was certainly the language of common life. Side by side we have Chinese documents of the 2nd and 3rd Centuries of the Christian era.

Khotan came into direct contact with China from the time of Tchang Kien's mission. As a consequence of this mission Khotan sent an embassy to China during the reign of Wou-ti of the Han dynasty in 140-87 B.C. After a temporary silence Khotan was compelled by the invasion of Pan-tchao in the beginning of 2nd Cen. to accept the suzerainty of China, and to remain a faithful ally for a long time.

Buddhism was introduced into Khotan from Kasmir. But Khotan received Buddhism through other channels too, from Kasghar and Yarkand. Though, we do not know definitely the time when it was introduced we have some record of its later history in Khotan. Already in the year 259 A.D. a Chinese monk named Tchouhche-hing comes to Khotan for the study of Buddhism. Tchou She hing is a fairly well-known figure in the early history of Chinese Buddhism. It was he who compiled the catalogue of the Buddhist texts translated into Chinese. On account of



difficulties in the interpretation of Buddhist texts, he wanted to study with good teachers who, he heard, were to be found in Khotan. He died there at the age of eighty but succeeded in sending a collection of sacred texts to China through his disciple Punyadhana (*Fou Jiu Tan*), most probably a monk of Khotanese origin. Shortly after in 291 A.D., another Khotanese monk named Moksala (*Wou-lo-tch'a*) went over to China and translated a Mahāyāna text, the famous *Pancavimsati Sāhāsrika Prajñāpāramitā*. In the beginning of the 5th Cen. (401-433 A. D.) a Chinese prince of Leang-tcheu, named Ngan Yang came to Khotan for the study of Mahāyāna. He settled down there in the *Gomati-mahāvihāra* and studied the Mahāyāna Buddhism with an Indian teacher named Buddhāsena (*Fo-to-se-na*), who was a zealous adept of Mahāyāna and "in all the countries of the West was known as *She-tseu* (Simha) for all his attainments." Ngan Yang, on his return to China translated some of the most important Mahāyāna texts. At about the same time Dharmakṣema an Indian monk proceeded from Kasmir to Khotan as he heard that it was the best place for the study of Mahāyāna. Subsequently when in China he undertook, the work of translating the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra* into Chinese he came to Khotan several times in search of a complete manuscript of this important text of Mahāyāna.

A few years later in 439 A. D. eight Chinese monks started from Leang-tcheou in search of Buddhist texts. They came to Khotan where the Quinquennial assembly (*Pancavārsika*) was being held at that time. They wrote down some texts from the mouth of Khotanese monks and returned to China.

Evidences can be multiplied for proving the great rôle of Khotan in the history of the transmission of Buddhism to China. Analysis of several texts translated into Chinese have shown beyond the shadow of a doubt that Khotanese monks were actually fabricating scriptures in the 4th and 5th Centuries A. D. They show indirectly what power the Khotanese Buddhist Church was commanding for several Centuries.\*

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\* The Paper was read before the Greater India Society and is a part of the Bulletin "India and China" which is being printed by the Society.



## THE ESSENCE OF VEDANTA

(Continued from page 124)

### [ VEDĀNTASĀRA ]

येहिकानां सक्चन्दनवनितादिविषयभोगानां कर्मजन्यतया-  
नित्यत्ववत् आमुष्मिकाणाम् अपि अमतादिविषयभोगानाम् अनित्यतया  
तेभ्यो नितरां विरक्तिः—इहामुत्रफलभोगविरागः । १७

17. Renunciation of the enjoyment of fruits of action in this world or hereafter :—This is the same utter<sup>1</sup> disregard for the enjoyment of immortality<sup>2</sup> etc. hereafter on<sup>3</sup> account of their being unreal as for the enjoyment of such earthly<sup>4</sup> objects as the flower-garland, the sandal-paste and the wife, which are unreal on account of their being results of action.

[1 Utter etc.—It is a particular tendency of the mind which dissuades an aspirant from such enjoyment.

2 Immortality—The word means here abode in heaven which is as impermanent as the mundane existence. When the merit that has earned it is exhausted, the soul returns to the earth for a new birth.

3 On account of etc.—It is unreal because it is the result of sacrifices etc. Comp. “तद् यद्येह कर्मजितो लोकः क्षीयत एवमेव अमुत्र पुण्यजितो लोकः क्षीयते।” (Chhā. Upa. 8, 1, 6). A thing which has an origin cannot be permanent. Therefore dispassion should be practised for all things, even for the highest that man may attain—the position of Brahmā, which is also as unreal as any earthly object. Comp. “यच्च काममुखं लोके यच्च दिव्यं महत् सुखं । तृष्णाद्वयदुःखसंन्येते नार्हतः बोद्धव्यं कस्मात्॥” (Mahābhārata 12. 6636)

4 Earthly—What is related to the existing body.

Renunciation has been enumerated as the second Sadhana as without it the practice of the third one is not possible.]

शमादयस्तु—शम-दमोपरति-तितिक्षा-समाधान-श्रद्धाख्याः । १८

18. Shama etc. :—These are Shama or the restraining of the outgoing mental propensities, Dama or the restraining of the external sense-organs, Uparati or the withdrawing of the self, Titikshā or forbearance, Samādhāna or self-settledness, and Shraddhā or faith.

[Detailed explanations of these terms follow. The acquisition of these virtues is enjoined here, as without them the aspirant cannot feel eager for Freedom.]



**शमः तावत्—श्रवणादिव्यतिरिक्त्विष्येभ्यः मनसः निग्रहः । १६**

19. *Shama* is the curbing<sup>1</sup> of the mind from all objects except hearing<sup>2</sup> etc.

[1 *Curbing etc.*—As an extremely hungry man forgets all things except eating and shows an impatient eagerness for food, so the aspirant displays great disgust for the enjoyment of worldly objects and evinces eagerness for hearing scriptures etc. which is conducive to the attainment of Knowledge. But even then on account of previous tendencies the mind often turns to the enjoyment of earthly pleasures, leaving aside spiritual practices. Now *Shama* is that particular *Vritti* or function of the mind which keeps it in check from the pursuit of worldly pleasures.

2 *Hearing etc.*—Hearing of scriptures, thinking of their meaning and meditating on it.—श्रवणम्, मननम्, निदिध्यासनम् । ]

**दमः—बाह्येन्द्रियाणां तद्व्यतिरिक्त्विष्येभ्यः निवर्त्तनम् । २०**

20. *Dama* is the restraining of the external<sup>1</sup> organs from all objects except that.<sup>2</sup>

[1 *External etc.*—Organs are of two kinds, viz., of action and of knowledge. The five acting organs are those of speaking, grasping, going, evacuating and generating. The five perceiving organs are those of hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell. Mind is called the inner organ. Here the word *Dama* implies that particular function of the mind which turns away the organs from such objects as are other than hearing etc.

2 *That*—Hearing etc. See Note ante.]

**निवर्त्तितानाम् पक्षेषां तद्व्यतिरिक्त्विष्येभ्यः उपरमणम् उपरतिः ;  
अथवा विहितानां कर्मणां विधिना परित्यागः । २१**

21. *Uparati* is the cessation<sup>1</sup> of these restrained external organs from the pursuit of objects other than that,<sup>2</sup> or<sup>3</sup> it may mean the abandonment<sup>4</sup> of the prescribed<sup>5</sup> works according<sup>6</sup> to Scriptural injunctions.

[1 *Cessation etc.*—*Uparati* is that function of the mind which keeps the restrained organs from further pursuit of any other object than hearing etc.

2 *That*—Hearing etc. See Note ante.

3 *Or it etc.*—As the word *Uparati* according to the first definition differs very little from *Shama* and *Dama*, the alternative definition is given to make the meaning precise.

4 *Abandonment*—According to this definition the word *Uparati* means *Sanṛyāsa* or entering into the fourth order. Like the practice of *Shama* etc. the aspirant must accept the vow of monasticism as the essential *Sādhana* for the attainment of Knowledge. Comp. the following passages of *Sruti* and *Smṛiti* :



न कर्मज्ञा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागेनैके असृतत्वमानशुः । (Mahana. Upa. 10. 5)  
वेदान्तविज्ञानद्विभित्तार्थाः सन्न्यासयोगाद् यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः ।

(Mundaka Upa. 3. 2. 6).

एतमेव प्रवृजिनो लोकमीप्सन्तः प्रवृजन्ति । (Briha. Upa. 4. 4. 25).

पुत्रैश्चत्वारिंश विस्वैश्चत्वारिंश लोकैश्चत्वारिंश व्युत्थाय अथ भिक्षाचर्यं चरन्ति ।

(Briha. Upa. 4. 4. 26).

नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां सन्न्यासेनाधिगच्छति । (Gita 18. 49).

प्रवृत्तिसङ्गतो योगो ज्ञानं सन्न्याससङ्गतम् ।

तस्माद् ज्ञानं पुरस्कृत्य सन्न्यासेद्विह बुद्धिमान् ॥ (Mahabha. 14. 1195).

According to reason also entering into the fourth order is essential to the attainment of Knowledge. Therefore *Uparati* means the acceptance of the vow of *Sannyāsa* as a means to the realisation of Truth, and this is supported by *Sruti*, *Smṛiti* and reason.

5 *Prescribed etc.*—Such obligatory works as *Sandhyā*, *Agnihotra* sacrifice etc.

6 *According to etc.*—This is to warn against the abandonment of works through laziness or other *tāmasik* propensities. Regarding the scriptural injunctions comp. the following passages :

तद्वैके प्राजापत्याम् एष इष्टि कुर्वन्ति । (Jabala Upa. 4.)

प्राजापत्यां निरूप्येष्टि सर्व्ववेदसदक्षिणाम् ।

आत्मन्यग्नीन् समारोप्य ब्राह्मणः प्रयजेत् गृहात् ॥ (Manu 6.38)

तितिक्षा—शीतोष्णादिद्वन्द्वसहिष्णुता । २२

22. *Titikshā* is the endurance<sup>1</sup> of heat and cold and other<sup>2</sup> pairs of opposites.

[1 *Endurance etc.*—This virtue means the endurance of pleasure and pain, arising from heat and cold which are the inevitable associates of the body, by meditating on the Pure Self, knowing It as always free from heat, cold and other freaks of nature.

2 *Other pairs etc.*—They include respect and contumely, gain and loss, weal and woe, etc.]

निगृहीतस्य मनसः श्रवणादौ तदनुगुणविषये च समाधिः—  
समाधानम् । २३

23. *Samādhāna* is the constant concentration of mind, thus restrained, on hearing etc. and other<sup>1</sup> objects that are conducive to these.

[1 *Other objects*—They mean such virtues as modesty, humility etc. Or they may mean service of the Guru, compiling books, their preservation, etc.]



### गुरुपदिष्टवेदान्तवाक्येषु विश्वासः—अद्वा । २४

24. *Sraddhā* is the faith<sup>1</sup> in the words of Vedanta<sup>2</sup> as taught by the Guru.

[1 *Faith*—Gita, Mahabharata and other scriptures enjoin that a spiritual practice without faith does not produce the requisite effect.

2 *Vedanta*—See ante.]

### मुमुक्षुत्वम्—मोक्षेच्छा २५

25. *Mumukshutva* is the yearning for Freedom.

[When the aspirant is equipped with the three above-mentioned *Sādhana's*, he cannot but have a strong desire for liberation. Then alone does he go to a spiritual guide seeking the Knowledge of Truth.]

(To be continued)

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### The famous "Monkey Trial"

It is hoped that our readers still remember the famous Tennessee trial in which Mr. John T. Scopes was found guilty in July 1925 of having taught Darwin's theory of evolution in the local high school. The Supreme Court of Tennessee, sitting at Nashville on Jan. 15 last, delivered its long-awaited judgment in the appeal from the sentence of £20 fine and costs passed by the Dayton Court.

Chief Justice Green reversed the decision of the local court on the ground that a judge cannot impose a fine of more than £10, it being the duty of the jury to impose a fine exceeding that amount. The entire bench of judges agreed that the verdict against Mr. Scopes should be quashed.

This does not however legalise the theory of evolution in Tennessee.

### Significance of the Chinese Struggle

It is characteristic of Mr. H. G. Wells that he often makes us view things from a new angle of vision. Thus, for example, it may not have struck us that the various political disturbances in the East as well as in the West are symptoms of the emergence of a new system of government. It is neither autocracy, democracy, or oligarchy that is going to be the future administrative system of the world—it is something entirely new. In Russia and China, and especially in China, Mr. Wells finds this new system taking shape. "When we look to China," he observes in course of an article in the *London Sunday*



*Express*, "there seems to be something new there. . . . It is the clear onset of a new phase, of a new China, like nothing the world has ever seen before, a challenge, a promise to all mankind."

He continues: "It marks a new age. The days of great adventurers seem to be past in any country larger than Italy, and even in Italy it is possible to regard Mussolini less as a leader than as the rather animated effigy of a juvenile insurrection. What has happened in these wider, greater lands (Russia and China) is something much more remarkable, something new in history, a phenomenon that calls for our most strenuous attention—namely, government, effective government, competent military control, and a consistent, steady, successful policy by an organised association.

"This Kuomintang in China in so far as it is an organised association is curiously parallel to the Communist Party which, standing behind the quasi-Parliamentary Soviets, has now held Russia together, restrained such dangerous adventurers as Zinovieff, and defended its frontiers against incessant foreign aggression for nine long years.

"We shall be extraordinarily foolish if we do not attempt to realise the significance of this novel method of controlling government which has broken out over two of the greatest political areas of the globe. We have now two Governments through organised associations, Governments which are neither limited monarchies, dictatorships, nor parliamentary Republics, on the American and French models, one in Russia, and now another over the larger half of China, which bid fair to spread over the entire breadth of Asia until they are in complete contact.

"When I say that the Communist Party and the Kuomintang are similar, I mean only in so far as regards organisation. They have profound differences in origin and aim and profession. . . .

"Some twenty years or more ago I wrote a fantastic speculation about government, called "A Modern Utopia," in which I supposed all administration and legislative functions to be monopolised by an organisation called the Samurai, which any one could join by passing certain fairly exacting tests and obeying the rules of an austere, disinterested, and responsible life. One was free to leave the organisation and drop power and responsibility when one chose. The organisation ran the world. There were no great heroes and leaders and there were no representatives nor parliaments nor elections. Any one who chose to face the hardships of the job could have a hand in control, but there was no room either for the adventurer or for appeals to the selfish crowd in the direction of public affairs.

"Now this fantasy seems to have been one of those odd guesses that hover close to latent possibilities. . . . This anticipation sprang only from an early recognition that modern means of communication, the power afforded by print, telephone, wireless and so forth, of rapidly putting through directive strategic or technical conceptions to a great number of co-operative centres, of getting quick replies and effective discussion, has opened up a new world of political processes. . . . So



it is that both New Russia and this New China that has hatched itself out so astonishingly in the last year are things as new and different structurally from any preceding political organisms as mammals were from the great reptiles that came before them. . . .

"The Kuomintang seems to owe its origins and inspirations to that valiant man, Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who so nearly escaped decapitation in the Chinese Legation in London, a quarter of a century ago. Its vital element is the student class, and especially the students freed by Western ideas, but by no means overwhelmed by them. It has come more rapidly to power against suppression. Its centre of origin is Canton; it is the creation of the South. . . . And while the Russian movement was primarily social and only secondarily Russian, the Kuomintang started apparently with the idea of "China for the Chinese," and accepted most of the established traditions of property. . . .

"Before we dismiss as incredible the development of a powerful and even dominating civilisation in the federated Soviets of Russia and Asia, let us recall the contemptuous superiority with which Europe regarded the United States at the outbreak of the Civil War. At any rate it seems to me that this New China, whose brain and nervous system is the Kuomintang and its centre Canton, is the most interesting thing by far upon the stage of current events, and the best worth watching and studying."

It is undoubtedly true that China's rising is big with tremendous possibilities, not merely political.

### Beethoven and Vedanta

Unseen indeed does the dew of Indian influence fall and bring into bloom fairest roses. Last month we had occasion to mention the indebtedness of Tolstoy to Indian thought and his study of the Vedanta and the Yogas. The March issue of the *Modern Review* discloses another instance of Indian influence in an article on Beethoven by Dr. Kalidas Nag. The centenary of the great Prussian musical composer, Ludwig van Beethoven, fell this year on the 26th of March. It appears from communications from Mon. Romain Rolland, contained in the article, that Beethoven "submitted to the attraction of Indian thought." Mon. Rolland has sent some literary fragments which explain "how the master spirits of the last century, e.g., Goethe and Beethoven, Schopenhauer and Tolstoy, felt a sort of family attraction towards India." So we may say that in a way India has contributed largely to the building up of the modern Western culture.

Beethoven first came in contact with the Indian thought in 1809 through the famous Austrian Orientalist, Hammer-Purgstall. He was then in Vienna. "Hammer had written for Beethoven an operatic poem of Indian inspiration which Beethoven styled as 'herrliches,' (magnificent) and the great musician was very happy to talk on the subject with the Orientalist and to learn something about Indian music."

"The fragments of Indian religious texts which were found amongst manuscripts of Beethoven are partly translations and partly



adaptations of the sublime philosophies of the *Upanishads* and of the *Bhagavad Gita*." Thus from the Upanishads, Beethoven culled these gems of thoughts: "God is Spirit (no-matter), and therefore, he is beyond all conceptual definition;.....There is no one greater than he, the Brahma—his spirit is self-contemplating.....O God, .....thine all-permeating presence in the universe upholds all things, Sun, Ether,—Brahma!" He adapted the following from the Gita: "Do not allow your life to pass in inactivity. Be active, fulfil your duty, banish all thoughts of the consequence and of the result—which may be good or evil; for such serenity is the criterion of spiritual values." There are also some interesting jottings from Indian literature. Altogether Beethoven was deeply influenced by Indian thought. But he seemed "to have been more attracted by the religious thoughts of India than by her poetry."

#### A "Daridra-Narayana" Programme.

If often gives us great pleasure to observe the silent and steady process by which the ideas of Swami Vivekananda are penetrating the nation. Of all his ideas, the one which has become most popular is that of the worship of the Divine in man. We have often come across his famous symbolical phrase *Daridra-Narayana* being used in quite unsuspected quarters. It may be that the full significance of this word-symbol is not often appreciated. But it is bound to tell by and by.

The latest instance of such a pleasing discovery we found in the editorial of *Forward* (Calcutta) of the 8th March. It is said therein that the Congress Party in the Corporation had pre-arranged a programme of work for the improvement of the Corporation, which it called the "*Daridra-Narayan* programme" and which included various kinds of civic services. The very designation indicates the spirit in which the Congress Party in the Calcutta Corporation proposed to approach its duties. This is undoubtedly the right spirit. If all our public workers should adopt this worshipful attitude towards the objects of their service, India's triumph will not remain far off.



## **SWAMI PRAKASHANANDA : IN MEMORIAM**

A cable from America brings the very sad news of the sudden death of our beloved brother Sannyasin, the Swami Prakashananda, for twenty years a preacher of Vedanta in America and for eleven years in charge of the Hindu Temple at San Francisco, California.

Born at Calcutta, in 1874, of Brahmin parents, the Swami from his childhood was brought up in a religious atmosphere. At his mother's knees the sweet-tempered boy learnt to lisp the prayers taught to every youngster of his caste. And other ladies of the household instilled his budding intellect with ideas of morality through stories of Hindu scriptures.

Though of a lively disposition, Sushil, as he was then called, at school was naturally drawn into friendship with boys of good behaviour. Youths of dubious character could never attract him. Then came his college days when during his hours of leisure he would try to solve the mysteries of Eastern and Western philosophy. Often he could be seen in the company of a few selected friends in some garden or other solitary places in the dusk of evening, discussing the different phases of Hindu religion.

It was during this period of his life that news reached Calcutta of the Swami Vivekananda's phenomenal success in America. The student community was roused, and Sushil and his friends perused and eagerly discussed every item of information they could get hold of. Printed accounts of Swamiji's lectures in the Calcutta papers captivated their young minds. They were charmed by the beauty of these addresses. The Swami Vivekananda became their hero. They regarded him as a prophet and future leader of their nation. And listening to his stirring appeal to young men to work for the good of humanity, Sushil decided to respond to this earnest call, and to become Swami Vivekananda's disciple.

In the mean time, since 1890, he kept in close touch with the Ramakrishna Math at Alambazar where he enjoyed the company of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna's direct disciples. He joined in their worship and kirtanas, and learned much about the great saint of Dakshineswar, his life and teachings.



At last, in 1896 when the inner urge to renounce the world became overpowering, Sushil, abandoning his university career joined the Brotherhood as a Brahmacharin, and in the following year when the Swami Vivekananda returned from America received initiation from him into the most holy order of Sannyasa. Henceforth he was known as the Swami Prakashananda.

The young Sannyasin now lived constantly in the shadow of that great personality, the Swami Vivekananda, absorbing his ideas, following his instructions, moulding his character after the life of his master. Thus he became one of Swamiji's foremost disciples and an untiring worker of the Ramakrishna Mission.

In 1898 Swamiji sent him with another disciple to preach in Eastern Bengal, where his lectures were highly appreciated. Then from the latter part of 1902 till the beginning of 1906 he was at the editorial staff of Prabuddha Bharata and helped in the management of the Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati, in the Himalayas. And in April of 1906 he was deputed to assist Swami Trigunatita in conducting the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, in its own quarters, known as the Hindu Temple. After the lamented death of the revered Swami Trigunatita, in 1915, he took charge of the Hindu Temple which under his loving and able guidance has grown steadily in importance and usefulness. He laboured hard to place the Society on a sound financial basis, to interest more students in the teachings of the Vedanta, to raise the prestige of his motherland in the eyes of the American people. During his long ministry the Vedanta Society at San Francisco flourished as it had never done before.

The Swami visited and lectured at different places in California creating an interest in Vedanta wherever he went. At many places he was requested to start a branch Society. In 1915 he spoke at the Congress of Religion and Philosophy held in connection with the Panama Exposition. He also delivered lectures on Buddhism in his capacity of Vice-President of the International Buddhistic Congress.

These various and endless activities began to tell on the Swami's health. But disregarding his own convenience and need of rest he continued to labour day and night, teaching,



preaching, always at the beck and call of his students, always ready to console and sympathise with a troubled heart.

At last the students realized that a change and rest were imperative. They presented the Swami with a handsome purse for a flying visit to his dear motherland. The Swami remonstrated that he could not leave his work, that it would suffer by his absence. The students, however, assured him that among themselves they would carry on the activities of the Vedanta Society. They requested him to return soon, and to bring with him another Swami to share his labour.

At last the Swami consented. He was now overjoyed at the prospect of meeting again his brother Sannyasins, of visiting again the places of his youth, of living over again his early days of spiritual enthusiasm, of seeing again many spots of sacred association. And so, on October 21st, 1922, he sailed for India, accompanied by Brahmachari Gurudasa and two lady devotees.

His trip to India proved a great success. The Swami received the warmest welcome wherever he went. He was still the old Sushil, simple, childlike, cheerful, loving, unchanged by long contact with the West.

But in India as abroad, he did not take the rest he needed. Many were the demands made on him. His brother monks tried to shield him, but the public knows no considerations. And it was not in the Swami's nature to refuse a single demand. Receptions, informal talks, lectures, private interviews, inspection of new centres of the Mission, visits to different parts of India, these filled his time. And almost before he realized it his short visit had come to an end. His American work was calling him. He thought of his faraway students left without a shepherd.

In April, 1923, he undertook the return journey, *via* New York City. The Swamis Raghavananda and Prabhavananda accompanied him, the former as far as New York City, the latter to San Francisco, as his co-worker.

The San Francisco students were jubilant at the return of their beloved teacher. They accorded him and Swami Prabhavananda a most hearty welcome.

The two Swamis now lived together at the Hindu Temple. It seemed Swami Prakashananda would now enjoy a little more leisure. But this was not what he was looking for. "When



my work is finished, I will rest," he used to say in his sweet, smiling way. "Now I must be up and doing to spread Swamiji's message all over California." And he sent his assistant on a lecturing tour to conquer new cities for the cause he was working for. "We must open new Vedanta Centres," he told Swami Prabhavananda. And his co-worker went creating new interest in Vedanta wherever he lectured, and finally, at the request of some earnest students in Portland, Oregon, established himself there.

Swami Prakashananda was delighted. "We are gaining ground," he said, "Swami Vivekananda is blessing the work. I want more Swamis, I will write to our headquarters in India."

In response to his earnest appeal the authorities at the Belur Monastery sent Swami Dayananda as his new assistant. He arrived at San Francisco in June, 1926, far from expecting that his senior brother Sannyasin would leave him so soon.

Swami Prakashananda's health was gradually failing. Symptoms of a previous attack of diabetes appeared again. And on February 13th, 1927, at the age of fifty-three, he was called from this world to join his great master whom he had served so faithfully.

His cheerful, loving disposition, his sympathy with those who were in trouble, his infinite patience, his childlike simplicity, combined with a deep, devotional nature, endeared the Swami to his students in California. They adored him from the bottom of their hearts.

The Swami's death leaves a vacancy it will be most difficult to fill. His students have lost in him a true friend and teacher, the Ramakrishna Mission a valuable worker, the Swamis of the Order one of their most beloved brothers and an outstanding example of selfless devotion to a noble cause.

May rest and eternal peace be the reward of him who on earth worked untiringly, unselfishly, who served God and man as his master would have it. We are reminded of Swami Vivekananda's words: Our salutation goes to all those God-like men who worked to help humanity.

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES OF BOOKS

### English

**SELF-REALISATION** by *Syamananda Brahmachary*. *To be had of the author at Sivala Ghat, Benares City.* Price paper Rs. 2, cloth Rs. 2-8. Pp. 288.

As indicated by the title, the subject-matter of the book is how the Self can be realised. The author's is the stand-point of Advaita Vedanta, and the following are among the topics he discusses: Deception of Maya; The theory of Maya propounded; The theory of opposites; Jivatwa,—how to get rid of; Worship of Maya and Truth; Law of Karma and Ehranti; Rebirth; the Self and the Realisation. The discussion is more popular than philosophical. The English of the book is capable of improvement.

**COSMOLOGY** by *Swami Prabhavananda*. *Published by the Vedanta Society, Wheelodon Annex, 10th and Salmon Street, Portland, Oregon, U. S. A.*

The writer shows in this booklet of 14 pages the scientific nature of the Hindu theory of creation. The treatment is remarkably simple.

**THE YEKANTIN.** *Published by the Yekanta Matha, P.O. Ranibennur, Karnataka Province, Bombay Presidency.* Price Re. 1-8. Pp. 106.

This is the "organ of the Yekanta Matha, devoted to the publication of the philosophical works of Sri Anandateertha Bhagawatpadacharya and the supremely illuminating commentaries thereon of Sri Jayateerthacharya." The present number which is the 1st part of the 1st volume, contains the English translation of the Brahma-Sutras with the commentary of Sri Madhwa and the gloss thereon of Jayateertha Bhikshu. The translation has been brought up to the end of the 1st pada of the 1st chapter, and is well done. We would however suggest that as the translation is meant mainly for those who are deficient in the knowledge of Sanskrit, it would better help them if copious explanatory notes are added in clarification of the terse passages in the gloss.

The present number is well printed, and is certainly a welcome addition to the Vedanta literature in English.

**LEADERS OF THE BRAHMO SAMAJ.** *Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.* Price Re. 1-8. Pp. 248.

The book is a collection of the life-sketches of the eminent Brahmo workers from Raja Ram Mohun Roy to Pundit Sivanath Sastri. It is a narrative of the social, religious, educational and philanthropic activities of the pioneers of the Brahmo movement. The volume is enriched with an exposition of the philosophy and tenets of Brahmoism, is well got up and illustrated.

**RAM-SITA** by *A. Christina Albers*. *Published by the Book Company Ltd., 4/4-A, College Square, Calcutta.* Price 12 as. Pp. 148.

A nicely printed volume containing the story of Ramayana in simple



blank verse. The writer has taken the liberty to depart in slight measures from the original version. '

### Hindi

**AYODHYA KANDA** of *Rām-Charit-Mānas* by *Tulsidas*, commented on by *Ramnaresh Tripathi*. Published by the *Hindi Mandir, Prayag (Allahabad)*. Price As. 14. Pp. Demy. 338.

The commentary of Mr. Tripathi is very simple and free from sectarian bias, and is bound to be very helpful to the Hindi readers. The book, very well printed and large enough, is being offered at a cheap price through the kindness of a patron who has rendered substantial financial help in bringing it out. We are confident the book will attain popularity.

### Bengali

**THE BIOLOGICAL CAUSE OF THE DECLINE OF THE HINDUS** by *Nibaran Chandra Bhattacharyya, M.A., B.Sc.* To be had of *Gurudas Chatterji & Sons, 203-1-1, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta*. Price Re. 1. Pp. 191.

A collection of essays covering many interesting topics, most of which were published originally in Bengali and English journals. The author discusses such subjects as fatalism, the cause of India's decline, ways and means of national regeneration, hygiene, degradation of matter, Sannyasa, etc. His treatment of the subjects is characterised by freshness of outlook.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Centre Started at Rajkot.

The opening ceremony of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Rajkot came off on the 5th of March with due éclat and solemnity. It fell on the auspicious birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, so it naturally became a day of consecration and joy. The morning opened with special Puja of Sri Ramakrishna and Homa joined by several distinguished gentlemen as well as His Highness the Maharaja Saheb of Morvi, who has been kind enough to lend his old Utaro at the Civil Station where the Ashrama has been placed now. The State Musician of the Rajkot State entertained the gentlemen present with a few select Hindi Bhajans.

In the evening a public meeting was held in the Ashrama grounds presided over by the Maharaja Saheb of Morvi. About three hundred gentlemen and several ladies were present at the meeting. The inaugural speech was made by the Maharaja Saheb. Among other things he mentioned that Sri Ramakrishna and the Mission founded under his name typified "Shiva and Seva," and hoped that the centre started at Rajkot would spread its benign influence gradually all over Kathiawar and be a source of inspiration to many. Swami Madhava-



nanda, the President of the Adwaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas, who was present at Rajkot in connection with the opening of the Ashrama, spoke feelingly on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, laying special stress on the ideal of the acceptance and toleration of all faiths as exemplified in the life of the great Master. Mr. P. M. Patel, Dewan, Morvi State, Mr. P. G. Masurekar, Bar-at-Law and Mr. Prabhuram Shankarji Shastri also spoke, dealing with the different aspects of the life of Sri Ramakrishna and the humanitarian activities of the Mission. With a vote of thanks to the chair by Mr. C. M. Shroff, Dewan, Rajkot State, the meeting terminated.

Swami Vividishananda, the former editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*, assisted by Swami Bhaveshananda will conduct the work of the centre, which would for the present consist mainly of giving class talks and lectures to the local gentry and students. The Thakore Sahib of Rajkot deserves special mention for his kind help and active interest in the work of the centre.

### Activities of Swami Sharvananda

Since leaving Madras, Swami Sharvananda has been doing extensive and valuable propaganda work in Southern, Western and Central India. At Mysore where he went in the last August, he delivered a number of lectures to the public and the students. The University of Mysore invited him to deliver a series of lectures on the Philosophy of the Upanishads. The lectures were given on the following subjects: First Principle, Cosmology, Epistemology and Psychology, Eschatology and the Law of Karma, and Ethics. The lectures were very well attended and much appreciated.

From Mysore the Swami went to Bombay where he stayed till February. During these months, he delivered many public lectures, and was invited by the Bombay University to deliver a series of extension lectures on the Upanishads. These were so well appreciated by his large educated audience that when the Swami had finished his series of four lectures, he was requested by the Registrar of the University to deliver another series of three lectures which all left a deep impression on the learned audience.

From Bombay, he went to Nagpur where also he delivered two lectures at the University of Nagpur. He spoke on the Vedantic Epistemology at the Philosophical Union to a deeply appreciative gathering. He also went to Amraoti and delivered a lecture at the college there under the presidency of its English Principal. The lecture was so successful that the president remarked that "there never has been a lecture like this since the opening of this college."

It is an auspicious sign that the universities, generally the stronghold of Western culture and indifferent to our own, have been taking interest in the truths of the Vedanta. We do hope that the other universities also will invite the Swami to discourse on Vedanta to their students and the general public. We wish the Swami ever increasing success in this new field of action.



### **Christmas Services at the Vedanta Society, Portland, U. S. A.**

The chapel at the Vedanta Headquarters had been beautifully decorated by loving hands, guided by devoted hearts. Evergreens, with the brilliance of poinsettias and red Christmas bells gave an atmosphere most fitting to the occasion.

On Christmas night, in this artistically harmonious setting, was held a deeply impressive service, Swami Prabhavananda taking as his theme, "The Birth of Christ."

His earnest words intensified in the hearts of his hearers the longing for one-pointed devotion to the Christ-Ideal and for the birth of the Christ within, that each may be able to say, with full realization, as did the Master: "I and my Father are One."

Special Christmas music was sung by a quartet of members and our beloved Swami closed the services with a moving benediction upon us all.

In the month of December Swami Prabhavananda spoke on the following subjects on Sundays: How to Conquer our Egotism. Who is the Savior? Sayings of Christ from the Cross. What is meditation. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Gospel of John). Poise and Efficiency. The Great World Teachers. "He must increase but I must decrease" (John).

### **Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Bombay**

In response to an invitation of the Western India Vivekananda Society, Swami Sharvananda came to Bombay in February, 1923, and delivered a series of lectures. By his learned discourses and brilliant conversations the Swami won the golden opinion of the public of Bombay. Some of the prominent citizens requested the Swami to start a centre of the Mission in Bombay and the first centre of the Mission was started at Santa Cruz in 1923 in a rented house. Swami Shivanandaji, the President of the Ramakrishna Order, visited the city in January, 1925. His presence created great enthusiasm amongst the devotees and admirers of the Mission. A movement was set on foot to have a permanent home for the Ashram. A plot of land was purchased from the Development Department and the President laid the foundation stone. The building and the land cost Rs. 25,000 of which Rs. 10,000 were subscribed by the public. The Ashram authorities had no other alternative than to run into debt of Rs. 15,000. A Parsee devotee who wants to remain unknown, has recently paid off the whole amount of the debt. The gift has come unexpectedly and spontaneously. The Bombay branch of the Mission will for ever cherish the memory of the noble-souled generous Parsee gentleman with gratitude.

This year, Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj arrived at Bombay on the 22nd December accompanied by Swami Yatiswarananda. The opening ceremony of the newly-built shrine took place on the 26th of December. He himself carried the photo of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and performed Puja and Arati. While he was engaged in the sacred function, Bhajan parties were singing with fervour. The terrace was



crowded with devotees and spectators. Everybody felt the presence of the Lord at least for the moment. Later, Swami Sharvananda who is now staying at the Bombay Ashram, performed the Puja with due rites and ceremonies, befitting the occasion. In the evening also a large number of people assembled to worship the Prophet of the age whose empire is extending as days are rolling on.

#### **The R. K. Mission Students' Home, Calcutta**

The report of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Calcutta, for the year 1926 shows that it is making steady progress. At the end of the year it had 25 student-inmates of which 14 were free, 4 half-free and 7 paying. Some of them showed excellent results in the University Examinations.

The merit of the Home is that it supplements the College education by a training at home. Thus there were scriptural classes throughout the year except during the vacations, celebrations of various festivals and Saturday classes. A Mss. magazine was conducted by the students, and there was a tailoring class twice a week held by an hony. expert. All household duties except cooking were managed by the inmates.

The financial conditions require to be greatly improved. The total income to the General Fund including the balance of the last year was Rs. 11,508-7-9 and the total disbursements Rs. 6,728-6-0. The Building Fund is growing rather slowly, the balance being only Rs. 14,918-4-6. The Permanent Fund amounts to Rs. 2,555-9-3 only. The Home deserves unstinted support from the public, for it is fulfilling a unique function in the educational sphere of Bengal. Contributions may be sent to the Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, 7, Halدار Lane, Bowbazar, Calcutta.

#### **Sri Vivekananda Society, Poona**

Consequent on the visit to that place of Swami Sharvanandaji of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission recently a Society has been started with about 25 members. The object of this Society is to study religion and philosophy in synthetic light as held out by the great Swami Vivekananda.

The opening ceremony of this Society and the Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda came off on Tuesday, the 25th January at 6 p.m. at Sardar Moodliar Club, Raste's Peth, opposite to King Edward Memorial Hospital, Poona. Mr. L. R. Gokhale presided on the occasion. Professor Damle of Fergusson College, Poona, delivered an instructive and inspiring lecture on the life and work of Sri Ramakrishna and of Swami Vivekananda. There was a very large gathering of ladies and gentlemen. The function came to a close with a vote of thanks to the chairman and the learned lecturer of the day and distribution of flowers.



# Prabuddha Bharata

উদ্ভিদ জীবন



প্রাচ্য বরাহসিদ্ধান্ত ।

*Katha Upa. 1. III. 14.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## NOTES OF CONVERSATIONS WITH THE HOLY MOTHER

[These notes, taken from the diaries of disciples as published in the Bengali monthly, *Udbodhan*, derive their special value from the simplicity and directness with which many aspects of practical religion are herein touched upon and illuminated. To those of us who had the unique privilege of knowing her, these words have an extreme spiritual value and significance, as those of one who was regarded as the first and the greatest disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and possessed of immeasurable spiritual power and wisdom, may well claim to have. The first instalment of the notes was published in last December.]

The Holy Mother said: "The Master would often advise me to take short walks for the sake of health. In those days I used to live in the *nahavat*\*. I would bathe at four in the early morning and enter my room for the day. One day he said to me, 'A Bhairavi† will come to-day. Dye a cloth for her. I shall have to give it to her.' And she came after the midday worship at the Kali temple, and the Master conversed with her for a long time. She was a little hot-brained. She

\* A small room in the Dakshineswar Kali temple, situated a little apart from the inner enclosure and meant for the temple music.

† A nun and votary of Mother Kali.



would look after me, but sometimes threaten me that if I did not keep cold rice for her she would kill me with her trident. That would frighten me. But the Master said, 'Do not fear. She is a right kind of Bhairavi,—that is why she is a little hot-brained.' She would sometimes beg enough foodstuffs for a whole week. . . . . During his Sadhana days the Master would often see tempting visions. These would frighten him, but he would reject them. One day he had a vision in the Panchavati, in which he saw a boy coming to him. He was plunged in anxious thought. Then the Mother revealed to him that the boy was a cowherd of Vraja, one of the divine companions of Sri Krishna, and would come to him as his spiritual son. When Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda) came, he said, 'This is the same *Rakhal* (cowherd) come to me. What is your name?' The boy said, 'Rakhal.' 'Then it is quite right,' said the Master.

"Hajra said to the Master, 'Why do you think so much of Narendra and Rakhal? Why do you not dwell constantly in God?' 'See how I dwell in Him!' said the Master and at once plunged into Samadhi. His beard and hair on the head and the body stood on end, and he remained thus for an hour. Ramlal recited the names of God in his ears and gradually brought him down to the normal state. The Master then said to Ramlal, 'Did you see what is meant by dwelling in God? That is why I keep down my mind by thinking of and loving Narendra and others.' Ramlal said, 'It is best you live in your own way.' "

I asked Mother if I should continue the practice of Pranayama which I had begun.

The Holy Mother replied: "Yes, you may practise a little, but not much, for it may heat the brain. But if the mind becomes calm of itself, what is the use of Pranayama?"

I said: "But, Mother, nothing is accomplished till the *Kundalini*\* is awakened."

"Surely the *Kundalini* will wake up. Go on repeating His name, everything will come out all right. You may repeat His name a million times even though the mind is unsteady. You

\* *Kundalini* = 'coiled-up.' The sleeping spiritual energy is so called and represented as a serpent.



will hear the *anāhata dhvani*† before the Kundalini awakes. But everything depends on the grace of the Divine Mother. The other day during the small hours of the morning, I had a vision of a *Sivalingam*—of Viswanatha.”‡

“But, Mother, these stone symbols of Siva no longer satisfy us.”

“Nay, my son, these are true. Many great sinners who visit Benares are redeemed of their sins by touching the symbol of Viswanatha. He is graciously accepting every body’s sin. On Saturdays and Sundays all sorts of people come and salute me, touching my feet. This makes my feet burn. . . . .”

There was a devotee who used to visit the Monastery and the Holy Mother very regularly. But he suddenly stopped visiting. The change seemed mysterious. I asked Mother the reason of it. She said: “It is due to his past *Karma*. It has overwhelmed him at last. . . .” “But,” said I, “if everything is according to the will of God, why then does He not destroy his *Karma*?”

“Yes,” she rejoined, “He may destroy it, if He wills. Just see how even the Master had to suffer the consequence of his action. His elder brother (Ramkumar) suffering from a high malignant fever was drinking water. But fearing that water would aggravate the illness, the Master snatched the glass away from his hand. This displeased his brother highly. He said, ‘Just as you have refused me water now, so shall you be unable to eat anything in your last days.’ The Master said, ‘I did it for your good. Why did you curse me?’ His brother began to cry and replied, ‘I do not know why this curse came out of my lips.’ This was however fulfilled. The Master had to suffer for his *Karma*. During his last illness, he could scarcely eat anything. . . . .”

On another occasion I enquired if I should count when I did my *japa*.\* The Holy Mother said: “No, do it without counting, for counting often diverts the attention from the *japa*.” I asked: “How is it that *japa* does not lead me deep into God-absorption?”

† The supernatural sound *Om*, perceivable in the superconscious state.

‡ The Holy Mother was then staying at Benares.

\* Repetition of God’s name.



She replied : "It will by and by. But do not give up *japa* even if the mind is unwilling and unsteady. You must go on with the repetition. And you will find that the mind is getting gradually steadier—like a flame in calm air. Any movement in the air disturbs the steady burning of the flame ; even so the presence of any thought or desire makes the mind unsteady. The *mantram* must be correctly repeated. An incorrect utterance delays progress. A woman had for a part of her *mantram* the word *Rukmini-nāthāya*. But she would repeat it as *Ruku*. This impeded her progress. But she got the correct *mantram* afterwards through His grace."

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## " THE SUDRA HABIT "

BY THE EDITOR

Nearly two years ago Rabindranath Tagore contributed an article on "Sudra-dharma" to the Bengali monthly, *Prabasi*, edited by Ramananda Chatterjee, also the editor of the *Modern Review*. The *Modern Review* for March last has published a translation of it under the title "The Sudra Habit," and given it the place of honour. The occasion of this publication is obviously that towards the end of his essay, Tagore makes some prophetic remarks about the employment of Indian soldiers by the British in their fight against the Chinese and considers that such an ignominious employment of Indians has been possible because of the Sudra habit i.e. the spirit of dispassionate (mechanical ?) obedience and service that the *Varṇashrama dharma*, usually translated as caste system, has inculcated upon us from immemorial past. He believes that the idea underlying the famous verse of the Gita—*Better death in one's own dharma, for the dharma of another is even more to be dreaded*—has been the cause of the gradual ruin of our people. Rabindranath has devoted the greater part of his essay to the consideration of the merits and demerits of the caste system and the above is his conclusion.

The caste system indeed requires detailed and deep criticism. For it is one of the fundamentals of Hindu collective life ; it pertains not merely to religion or society but also to our econo-



mic life. In fact it is the frame work of our individual and collective life in all its aspects. The caste system, in spite of its present disrupted and degraded condition, is by no means dead. And it is urgently necessary to know its value and utility in the reconstruction of the nation's future. This is one of the reasons why we are returning again and again to this theme. And we hope our readers will not grudge us their company in an examination of Rabindranath's statement of the caste system and his verdict upon it.

The article is characterised by the usual insight and imagination of the great poet. He begins with a comparison of the caste system with the social economy of the West. He observes: "Even where no artificial barriers are set up in the way of the individual choosing the means of his livelihood, fate in most cases does not leave him free. The man who is entitled to dream of becoming Prime Minister may, as a matter of fact, be forced to sweep the streets for a living. In such case he cannot but be in a state of inward rebellion. . . . In countries where the earning of livelihood has nothing to do with religion the fact nevertheless remains that society cannot get on without the performance of the work of the lower orders, and therefore the greater portion of the people have still to go on doing such work. . . . India of old had solved the problem thus arising, by making occupation hereditary. In compulsion by the State lies the insult of servitude that leads to brooding rebelliousness. Here the compulsion was of *dharma*,—to follow the occupation of one's caste was enjoined as a religious duty. *Dharma* asks of man renunciation,—a renunciation, however, which is not a deprivation, but is glorious."

But this excellence of the *Varnashrama dharma* has been marred, according to Rabindranath, by at least two basic faults. He believes *firstly* that the hereditary principle of occupation has made us inefficient inasmuch as an avocation, especially one that requires intelligent initiative, cannot be made hereditary without being degraded into mere mechanical forms; and *secondly* that the hereditary principle is maintained by looking upon the caste rules and conventions as sacred and inviolable, and this undue reverence for caste rules has made the people so many unintelligent, unthinking, obedient tools, impervious to all wrongs and insults. Let us see if the poet has any valid reasons for thinking so. We may say at once that we do not agree with



him in his reading of the problem. We admit that the caste system has now become mechanical and is full of defects, but we differ when he thinks that it is the caste system that has emasculated the country. We hold that it is some other cause that has degraded the nation and with it all its institutions including the caste system.

As regards the first defect, Rabindranath says: "Certain types of work are not a mere matter of external habit, but depend for their proper performance on intelligent initiative. . . . . But confining them to a particular caste the outward paraphernalia may be retained, but the inner living quality of the work is inevitably lost. . . . . To make improvements, even in the products of manual labour, the application of mind is necessary. When that is destroyed by hereditary pursuit of the caste avocation, man is reduced to a machine, and can but keep on repeating himself."

Thus Rabindranath imagines a necessary antagonism between hereditary profession following traditions and intelligent individual initiative. He does not explain it, he simply assumes it. We however do not see any reason why there should be this antagonism. It may be that if the same *individual* were to follow the same profession for several centuries continuously, without dying, he would become mechanical and dead to the spirit of his profession. But as a matter of fact every generation is bringing fresh batches of individuals to the performance of the caste duties, and they are quite free to improve upon their predecessors, as indeed they have done if history is to be believed. Tagore seems to assume that the phenomenon of the outward paraphernalia being retained and the inner living quality of the work being lost is peculiar to the caste system. But is it not inevitable in all human activities, whether hereditary or of individual initiative? Let us take the cases of Mullas and Padres. Have not their professions become as formal and mechanical as that of the Hindu priests? Yet they are not caste-bound.

Apart from the supposed mechanisation of the operatives, there are other aspects of the hereditary principle of profession, which we may consider here, though Rabindranath does not mention them clearly. It may be said that (a) without competition—and the caste system tends to eliminate competition—



progress is impossible, and (b) that the hereditary principle prevents new genius from coming from outside into the castes. As regards the first point, it is only partly true. If competition stimulates progress, the hereditary principle also does the same. Generation after generation the fathers have been carefully handing down their knowledge and experience to the sons, and even a slight improvement in each generation means much in the long run. Experience also does not show that the hereditary principle has been less effective than competition. It will be granted that in arts and crafts the achievements of the Hindus have been as signal, if not more, as those of any other people. Their past achievements compare very favourably with even our much-vaunted modern products. And we know arts and crafts have been hereditary among the Hindus. If it is argued that the hereditary principle, though successful at one stage, brings about later on rapid atrophy and degradation through the mechanisation of professions, our reply is that if a trade can flourish for centuries in full vigour, then its subsequent ruin must be traced to some other cause than the hereditary principle.—Surely a test lasting through centuries is sufficiently proved and reassuring.

The second point also is only partly true. The caste system may suppress a few cases of genius. But that is not an unmixed evil. Geniuses are not wholly beneficial to mankind. Though they improve arts and crafts, they also throw a vast majority of craftsmen in the shade and create great economic confusion. The caste system prevents these sudden disturbances from outside, though of course it does not suppress the birth of geniuses within the caste folds themselves. But in the latter case the advantage is that geniuses cannot selfishly keep aloof but must share their special knowledge with their kinsmen. One point in this connection should not be lost sight of. It is that ninety-nine per cent of people are of average taste and intelligence, without any special leaning or aptitude, and that choice of profession with them is only a matter of early suggestion and training. These ninety-nine per cent can easily and more conveniently take to their parental callings without violence to their inner being. The one per cent of geniuses may always have their way. We hear of them even in ancient days. We read of Brahmin warriors, Kshatriya sages, Sudra and Vaishya Rishis, hunter Kshatriyas, etc. Every system, social or econo-



mical, is designed for the majority ; no human institution can be true of *all*. The respective merits of the competitive and the hereditary principle as applied to avocations, are that competition is slightly more beneficial to the arts and crafts but the hereditary principle is more beneficial to the artisans and craftsmen themselves. The question that has to be answered in this connection is whether we should look more to the benefit of the crafts or of the craftsmen. India's answer was and is that the welfare of men should be considered to be much superior to mere industrial efficiency.

Tagore's second charge against the caste system is graver still. Hereditary profession mechanises ; but the underlying policy that makes professions hereditary degenerates the spirit and causes not merely industrial inefficiency, but also an all-round degradation of the intellectual and spiritual life. For it makes us look more and more to the form than to the spirit. And thus we have become a nation of Sudras—abjectly docile servants. The poet says : “The mental and moral qualities of Brahmanhood demand personal power and effort,—it is only the external observances that belong to tradition. . . . . The words of our *shastra* still ring in our ears,—*Better death in one's own dharma, for the dharma of another is even more to be dreaded.* But this has come to mean that each caste must at all costs follow its traditional rules ; which, again, in practical effect is reduced to this, that the fixed observances must be kept up, without reference to their significance or utility. . . .” We admit Hinduism looks upon forms and traditions as sanctified and their continuity as of the utmost importance. Rabindranath argues that such reverence for forms tends to draw the attention more and more away from the spirit. But he forgets that so long as we are vigorous and strong, mere forms cannot become unnaturally obtrusive, they remain as integral parts and expressions of our living motives and purposes. The separation of them comes about only after we cease to live, just as the shell of an animal separates after it dies. The bipartite division of form and spirit, though good analysis, is never real. So long as the spirit animates the form, they are a single whole. Our only peculiarity is that when the spirit departs, we do not allow the form to crumble down but retain it for further use. Rabindranath, in our opinion, has shown lack of comprehension



in his castigation of forms. He appears to have missed the significance of Hindu reverence for forms and why Hindus tenaciously hold on to even apparently dead forms. He evidently does not credit the Hindu idea that every form is capable, sometimes with slight modifications, of expressing various meanings from age to age.

He must admit that the forms which he now condemns were once the vehicle of living forces and significances. Supposing they are dead now, what would Rabindranath have us do? To discard them? Well, man cannot live without forms, he will have to borrow new ones. But when the nation is weak, will mere acceptance of new forms avail anything? New *spirit* must come. But if we study the growth of races and nations, we find that it is often out of the older fold, by availing of the seemingly dead forms, that the reforming prophets arise ;—such at least has been the experience of India. The forms, apparently dead, are not useless. They must be retained intact for the coming prophet to endow them with new purpose. Hinduism never professes that the significance of forms should remain permanent and static. On the other hand, it consciously changes the meaning of forms from age to age in accordance with the changing circumstances. It does not believe in iconoclasm, it believes in reinterpretation. Besides when the spirit is drooping or dead, it is the forms that hold a people from going down to complete ruin. Continuity of history and tradition is a potent safeguard against annihilation. Even in their dead condition forms are not an unmixed evil and in their living condition, they are not mere forms.

But though we deny that respect for forms necessarily deadens the spirit, yet we must admit that restriction in whatever form cannot but cramp the spirit to a certain extent. But the poet's estimation of the caste system as only restriction and no freedom is unjustifiable. In fact this apparent restriction only indicates a larger freedom which the caste system ensures to every one and therefore it is absolutely wrong to trace our present fall to the caste regulations. But before we turn to this point, we must refer to a point in Tagore's article which requires clarification. He says: "Be that as it may, the *dharma* of the Sudra is the only one that is as a matter of fact extant to-day in this land of India. . . . . Where else, indeed, in all the world can be found the like of those whose



very *dharma* has reduced them to hereditary slaves? Neither hurt nor insult can make them shrink from clinging fast to this *dharma* of theirs. Never have they known what it is to demand or receive respect; through the ages have they deemed themselves fulfilled by sheer persistence in the duty of their Sudra estate, in all its purity." From this passage as well as what Rabindranath says later on of the Sudra *dharma*, it is not clear whether he refers to the technical Sudras. If he does, then he is wrong to assume that "the Sudra obsessed with the observance of his own *dharma*, forms the vast majority of India." In fact we have at least as many Vaishyas, including the agriculturists who follow a Vaishya profession, as Sudras among the Hindus. Tagore does not specify anywhere what he means by Sudra *dharma*. We have to infer that by that he means slavish obedience—for Sudra's original duty was conceived as service of the upper three castes. But if we take his words to refer to the technical Sudras, we do not see how the whole caste system and the hereditary principle can come in for castigation. For then the poet would be supposed to imply that the duties of the other three castes do not tend to make them slavish and mechanical. But evidently that is not the meaning of the poet. He quotes again and again that verse of the Gita, —*Better death in one's own dharma, etc.*—in connection with his trenchant caricature of the Sudra habit. He remarks: "So, as I was saying, in this work of the Sudra there is neither self-interest, nor any higher interest, much less any glory,—all that there is in it is the shibboleth: *Better to die in one's own dharma.*" This verse, as is well known, does not concern the Sudra caste only, but states the attitude of all castes. We shall not therefore be wrong if we understand the poet to mean that the spirit indicated by this verse of the Gita, which underlies all castes, has produced in us an attitude of slavish following without question or protest, and made of all Hindus mechanical slaves of the powers that be. That is why he considers that the Sudra *dharma* alone is extant in India. "She will slay and be slain, with no question on her lips of why or wherefore, for that is forbidden by her *dharma*. . . . . Everywhere is she the bearer of menial burdens in a service that has neither meaning nor justification." But our charitable interpretation of the poet's words becomes difficult in view of the fact that the Sudra alone is forbidden by his *dharma* to question the order to serve, but



the duties of the other castes are not to serve orders, they having the full support of the *shastras* in refusing to submit to humiliating orders. Does Rabindranath then refer to the Sudra caste alone? Evidently that he does not do. The fact is that he is so carried away by his feelings that he has no patience to state his case in a way suitable to our common understanding. We shall not overrate this difficulty, but shall only mention that to trace the employment of Indian soldiers in the Chinese war to the evils of caste system seems to us rather a far cry, especially when we remember that Muhammedan soldiers who have not much respect for caste system could be employed during the last war against their own Caliph.

What we gather from all he has said about Sudra dharma is that the fundamental restrictive principle of the caste system has made us slavish, bound to forms, and dead to all spirit of freedom. We have stated before that this restriction would have made us all these if it had not an aspect of unlimited freedom. To judge a river by the limitation of its banks is to miss the free flow of its impetuous current. The caste system to be understood justly, must be judged in all its aspects. That Rabindranath does not do.

The caste system is not a mere economic system. But even an economic system cannot be judged from the mere economic view-point. In the scale of values, economic good stands low. The highest value is necessarily spiritual, at least so it has been thought in India from times immemorial. Our economic system must submit to this highest standard of judgment, and its operations must be so controlled that they may not obstruct spiritual progress and be a heavy drag on the individual and national energies. Social, political and intellectual activities must all be regulated in this way.

If the modern age has any lesson for us, it is that over-production and competition can easily make a hell of the world. These must be restrained and reduced to legitimate proportions. The best way to do so is to make occupation hereditary. We dealt with this point in our article on "Caste and Education" in November last. Peaceful pursuit of profession and an assurance of living without endangering the higher interests of life can be granted only by the caste system. It may to a certain



extent impair material progress, but that is more than compensated for by the spiritual gain.

The caste system has many aspects, economical, social, cultural, spiritual. We cannot dwell here on all of them. But what wonderful achievements lie to its credit both socially and culturally are known to all dispassionate students of Indian history. In its spiritual aspect it brings the highest spiritual freedom to the door of every one in whatever caste born ;—it teaches the doctrine of Karma Yoga which is the main object of the *Varnashrama dharma*. Socio-economic or cultural gains are secondary benefits. *In fact we shall fail to understand the true import of the caste system if we judge it by the standard of material or even intellectual efficiency.* Its final aim is purely spiritual. It assumes that the spiritual is the *only* good to be sought by man. All his other pursuits—for the average man must naturally be secular in the main—should be so conceived and moulded that they may eventually lead to spiritual self-realisation. This is Karma Yoga and this is the consideration that underlies that famous verse of the Gita,—*Better death in one's own dharma, etc.* It is easy to misunderstand this. If the main object of the caste system were material or intellectual good, such a dictum surely would have been disastrous. But when we remember that the Hindu law-givers aimed essentially at the spiritual growth of men, we at once find a deep and salutary purpose behind this rule. The poet's second charge against the caste system arises out of the failure to take the spiritual motive into account.

The spiritual good is realisable only through the purification of the heart,—the chastening of feelings, and not through intellectual powers. Desires must be eradicated. All our impulses should be turned towards the Divinity within. This requires that all our natural desires and activities should be conceived in the spirit of detachment and worship, by being related to God. And there must be the ever awake consciousness that all our thoughts and actions—our every moment—are for the realisation of the Divine. This is the spirit of Karma Yoga. It may be asked whether all Hindus are imbued with this spirit inasmuch as without it Karma Yoga will be meaningless. Our answer is that the efforts of our forefathers through millenniums have been to infiltrate the society with it, and we do believe that all the strata of society, more or less, are con-



scious of the spiritual goal of life. The ideal being made patent among all classes of the society, the next thing was to give a proper direction to their activities. Hence came the doctrine that it is not the *nature* of a work but the *way* in which it is done that finally counts in the spiritual life. We may do magnificent things, but if we do them in a selfish and passionate spirit, they are futile spiritually, for they do not purify the heart. But even a small thing done in the spirit of Karma Yoga, in a dispassionate, worshipful spirit, is highly beneficial, because it chastens the heart, and the purified heart reflects the glory of the Divine. Therefore there is no need of running mad after material efficiency, and all the ugly fighting that it requires, but let us do our own inherited work in the true spirit and we shall rapidly advance towards our goal.

This is the main direction of India's striving. And that is how it has been possible to discover spiritual giants even in the lower strata of society,—among weavers, cobblers, fishermen, cultivators, etc.—who laid no claim to efficiency or intellectualism. Their only preparation for sainthood was the purification of their heart.

To hold the doctrine of Karma Yoga—for that verse of the Gita implies that—as responsible for the downfall of India and to caricature it as slavish obedience, is, to say the least, preposterous. It does not mean mechanical following. *It means a conscious struggle from moment to moment to climb the spiritual height where alone the dispassionate performance of duties in the spirit of Karma Yoga is possible.* So long as the nation is strong, this struggle occupies the largest measure of its strength and attention. And then are born giants of spirituality and also giants in other provinces of life. For spirituality is the greatest strength. And when strength comes into the nation, it is manifested in all departments of life. Of course there are naturally periodical declines in strength. Then spirituality is at its ebb. Karma Yoga becomes mere formal observance and it seems that "under the oppressive burden of the Sudra habit groans the Hindu bowed in abjection." But that is because spirituality is gone and not because there is any inherent defect in the caste system itself.

It is scarcely fair and correct to judge the merits and demerits of anything in its fallen state. The caste system to



be truly understood must be studied in its rise and in its fall. Rabindranath draws his conclusions from its fallen state alone. And no wonder his conclusions are wrong. The caste system imparts a kind of efficiency—spiritual efficiency. India has followed through ages this goal. Should we now change it for intellectual and material efficiency? Of course a harmony of both these will be the ideal social system for us. But is it possible? We, alas, do not see much chance of such a perfection being ever realised in this imperfect world. Anyhow it is an ideal worth striving after, and to its consideration the best minds of the nation should address themselves assiduously.

## THE MESSAGE OF THE VEDAS

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We are accustomed to call any gathering of learned men by the name of *Sarasvati Sammelana*, because Sarasvati is ordinarily looked upon as the Goddess of Learning and the Presiding Deity of the Fine Arts. But, to my mind, Sarasvati connotes a greater idea than this, which we have unfortunately lost sight of. Sarasvati is the same as the Vedic Vác, the Word, the First Manifestation of Brahman whose Spirit, centred in Itself, brooded over the *Káraná Samudra*, i.e., the void and limitless Causal Ocean, in the midst of Primeval Darkness (Rv. x. 129). Simultaneously with the thought of creation arising in Brahman's mind was manifested Vác, the Word, or *Om* as we call it, whose vibrations filled the limitless void, creating, as if in the twinkling of eye, Ether, Wind, Light, Water and the Universe. Suns and Moons, Stars and Planets, Devas and other divine beings were evolved and came into existence, dancing around, as it were, in sheer glee. *Rita* and Order too were evolved out of Chaos, and creation proceeded apace. All this creation was evolved, as it were, out of Vác, the Word, the First to have been manifested in the dark and limitless void of the *Káraná Samudra*, and appropriately called *Sarasvati*, the One who has the *Saras* or the Causal Ocean for Her birth-place, and the First to have manifested Brahman. She is, as it were, the very Creative Principle of Brahman, identical with and inseparable from Him, so far as His manifestation is concerned, and the Revealer and Upholder of the Universe, in which Brahman has been infinitely manifested. . . . .

Vác is the Source or Mother of all Knowledge, divine and secular.



and thus has two aspects, *Parà* and *Aparà*. That Knowledge or *Vidyà*, which enables us to know or apprehend Brahman is *Parà*, and that which turns away our mind from Him is *Aparà*. *Aparà Vidyà*, if solely pursued, leads to our ultimate annihilation. It has, therefore, to be subordinated to *Parà Vidyà*, and its divergent current turned towards and blended with the current of the latter, so that the two united may reach Brahman in the long run.

As *Vāc* or *Sarasvatī* is co-extensive with, nay, greater than the Universe, our Knowledge also should be as wide as the Universe and cover every department of human thought and activity. But this Knowledge should be subordinated to *Parà Vidyà*, that which enables us to have a knowledge of, and a direct communion with Him who is the Source of this Universe and in whom all Knowledge merges. If we fail to make our Knowledge of Brahman the guiding principle of our life, we stand the danger of turning away from Him and straying out of the path, which ultimately may lead to our annihilation. Our Aryan ancestors fully grasped this central principle of knowledge, and founded a culture which was broad-based on the bed-rock of Truth, and has saved their descendants from total extinction.

Those who are engaged in the cultivation and pursuit of *Parà Vidyà* cannot, if they are true to themselves, look askance at *Aparà Vidyà*, and neglect it, and *vice versa*; for both are indissolubly linked with and supplement each other. Many will be surprised to learn that our great Rishis of old, while devoted to the cultivation of *Parà Vidyà* or *Brahma-Vidyà*, did not neglect the study and cultivation of *Aparà Vidyà* which comprises all the secular Sciences and Arts, such as Agriculture, Cattle-rearing, Trade, Commerce, Industries, Ship-building, Chariot-making, Political Science, Military Science, Sociology, Medical Science, Laws and even the arts of music, singing, dancing and verse-making, in fact, every Science and Art that make for human progress and enlightenment, with the ultimate object of the attainment of *Brahma-Vidyà*. Any scholar who carefully studies the Vedas cannot fail to be struck with this patent fact, which we in a later age seem to have lost sight of. . . . .

To my mind, there are certain important messages of the Vedas which we shall do well to ponder over and fully understand. The *First Great Message* is that Aryan culture is indigenous to the Punjab and is older than any culture that we know of, and that this ancient land was the cradle of the Aryan race, where our ancestors lived, and, through untold millenniums, laboured to build up a civilisation, liberal and comprehensive in character, and full of potentialities for the good of humanity as a whole. But Western scholars, to whom we owe so much, have fixed the age of Vedic culture at about 1500 or 2000 B. C. A very careful study of the *Rigveda*, however, will convince us that this estimate is not at all correct. There are internal evidences in this most ancient Scripture,



that go to show that there was a different distribution of land and water in northern India when the Vedic *mantras* were composed by, or revealed to the Risis. The Sarasvatī and the Satadru rivers used to flow in Rigvedic times directly into a sea which was situated to the south of the Punjab, where Rajputana now is (Rv. vii. 95, 2; iii. 33, 2). The former was a mighty river in those days, whose praises have been sung in many a hymn; but she has now been reduced to a mere rivulet and is lost in the sands of the deserts of Rajputana. The Satadru also, instead of flowing directly into the sea, is now a tributary to the Indus. The natural inference would be that in post-Rigvedic times the bed of the sea into which these rivers directly flowed was upheaved through extensive seismic disturbances, and obstructed their courses. The Sarasvatī, finding her course obstructed, at first meandered along the newly thrown-up sand-banks of the upheaved bed of the Rajputana sea, and cut out a new course till she reached the Arabian sea. The Satadru also deflected her course towards the west, till she joined the Indus as her tributary. There is also evidence in the Rigveda to show that the whole of the Gangetic provinces down to Assam was covered by a sea, extending along the foot of the Himālaya in Rigvedic times, and the Gangā, the most sacred river of the Aryans in later times, was only a very small stream in those days, discharging her waters into the Eastern Sea (the *Pūrva Samudra*, as it is called in the Rigveda), not very far from our present Hardwar. Hence she was not counted among the large rivers of the ancient Punjab, as it then was, and has been cited only once in the Rigveda to share a general praise of the Punjab rivers. (Rv. x. 75). Thus, the topography of the Punjab in Rigvedic times included in its southern and eastern boundaries large seas that entirely cut off the Province from the Southern Continent, or the Deccan. The climate of the Punjab also was extremely cold, as will appear from the fact that the year in the Rigveda was called by the name of *Hima* or Winter (Rv. i. 64, 14; ii. 1, 11; 33, 2; v. 54, 15; vi. 10, 7 &c). Now Geologists have ascertained the age of this different distribution of land and water and the prevalence of a cold climate in the Punjab to be the Pleistocene, or the post-Pleistocene epoch, and put it down between 50,000 and 25,000 B. C. Assuming that this lower estimate is correct, Rigvedic civilisation must be regarded as very old, at least older than any civilisation that History knows of. Geologists have admitted that, with the upheaval of the sea-bed in Rajputana, and the formation of the Gangetic plains by the accumulated alluvium brought down into the *Pūrva Samudra* by the Himalayan rivers, the climate of the Punjab changed from cold to hot, rain-fall became scanty, and the glaciers on the lower slopes of the Himalaya disappeared. With the disappearance of seas from the vicinity of the Punjab and of glaciers near the source of the Sarasvatī, and a scanty rain-fall, she became attenuated into an insignificant stream and ultimately got herself lost in the sands of the



desert of Rajputana. These are undoubted facts, proved by the internal evidence of the Rigveda, which make it necessary for us to change our idea of, and outlook upon ancient Indian history. We have got to realise for our self-consciousness as a nation that our ancient ancestors lived in this land from time immemorial, and developed a culture and civilisation, all their own, at a remote antiquity, when the ancient civilised nations of the world, now no more, were in their infancy, and "wrapped up in their winter sleep." Every atom in this ancient land is hallowed and sanctified with the dust of the feet of our glorious ancestors, and this land was truly their Mother-land, and the progenitor of their civilisation. Can there be any Aryan Hindu at the present day who will not feel a patriotic sentiment for this Holy Mother, and who will consider any sacrifice too great for reviving her ancient glory?

The *Second Great Message* of the Vedas is that our ancient ancestors were a united people, without any division into numerous castes, as at present, and without any restriction as regards inter-marriage and inter-dining. The Rigvedic *mantras* were composed during three long ages (Rv. iii. 32, 13 ; vi. 21, 5) and there is only one *mantra* in the *Tenth Mandala*, probably composed in the third or the latest age of the Rigvedic period, which distinctly mentions the four castes (Rv. x. 90, 12). Scholars are disposed to look upon this *mantra* as a later interpolation made by designing men, but I do not share this view. The existence of this *mantra* undoubtedly goes to show that the four castes were being gradually evolved in Aryan society, according to the particular tendencies (*gunas*) and occupations of men, but there is nothing to prove that the caste-rules were hard and fast, as at present, and prevented any worthy man of a particular class or caste from being admitted into another. These castes were more like *classes* than anything else, with no bar against inter-dining and inter-marriage. The son of a Risi was a physician and his daughter a grinder of corn (Rv. ix. 112, 3), and the son of a female slave became a Risi in those days (*Ait. Brdh.* ii. 8, 1 ; *Kaus. Brdh.* xii. 3). The latter whose name was Kavasa was greeted by Vasistha, Visvamitra, Bharadvāja, Vāmadeva &c., not only as their equal, but even as superior to them in some respects. Vedavyāsa too was not born of a Brahmin mother, and Risis married princesses, and kings the daughters of Brahmins and Risis. We all know that the great king Yayāti married Devayāni, the daughter of Sukráchārya, and the great king Sántanu married the daughter of a fisherman in the Epic age, without any blame. In the *Bhāgavata Purāna* we find that the Ksatriya clan, known as Dhāstra, became Brahmins (ix. *Story of Ila*), and Gārgya, Taryāruni, Kavi, and Puskārāruni, though originally Ksatriyas, became Brahmin (*Ibid ix. Story of the Purus*). Bharadvāja, though a Brahmin, was adopted by the Ksatriya king, Bharata, as his son (*Ibid*). Nābhāga, though originally a Ksatriya, became a Vaisya,



(ix. *Story of Ilā*). The Aryan people, in Vedic times, bore only one name, viz., that of Visas, and the four castes sprang out of this body, according to their *gunas* and occupations. It would thus appear that there was no caste system in early Vedic times, in the present sense of the term, and if there were classes, they too were pliant and elastic enough to admit others into their folds. As regards inter-dining, no restriction whatever appears to have existed. Cooks were usually recruited from the Sudra caste, and the custom continued down to the Epic age and even later. Only those, who were engaged in unclean occupations and led unclean lives themselves, were shunned socially to a certain extent, but not to the extent of being regarded as *Pariahs*, for we find a Vyādha (known as Dharma-Vyādha in the *Mahabharata*) occupying the position of a religious teacher, to whom even pious Brahmins resorted for religious instructions. Vaisya Tulādhāra also was a spiritual preceptor even of Brahmins. We thus find that the present baneful effects of the caste system, and caste prejudices did not exist in ancient times, far less in Rigvedic times, and the Aryans were liberal in their views, and united as a homogeneous people. If we really respect the Vedas as our holy Scripture, we cannot afford to disregard their teachings, and allow our narrow prejudices to take their place. A diligent study of the Vedas is essentially necessary for finding ways and means for the uplift and unification of the Hindus as a living and progressive nation.

The *Third Great Message* of the Vedas is that woman should be looked upon as an equal of man, possessing equal rights and privileges. The status of the Aryan woman in the Vedic age was high. She was never married in her infancy, and was allowed to grow up into youthful womanhood in her father's home, and to make a suitable choice of her husband. She was the mistress of her own house, having complete control over the domestic servants, performed the daily worship of Fire and of the Devas with her husband, and was honoured and respected by her husband, children and relations. Ladies could become Risis, and Ghosa, Lopamudra, and Visvavārā composed Vedic hymns, the last performing the duties of a Hotri also at a sacrifice. Vigorous and noble womanhood brought forth vigorous and noble progeny, and the ancient Aryan nation was not a nation of weaklings and cowards, without any stamina or back-bone. Even Risis prayed for the birth of sons who would be brave, noble-minded, well-versed in Vedic lore, capable of riding on brave steeds and meeting their enemies on the battle-fields (Rv. v. 23, 1, 2; vi. 31, 1). Women moulded the minds of their sons, and encouraged them to be brave, truthful and fearless in the expression of their opinions, even on the occasion of the election of a king by the people (A. V. iii. 4, 3). Such was the influence wielded by women in Vedic times in matters domestic, social and political. With degraded womanhood in our midst, we cannot aspire to be a great nation, and



our first and foremost duty should be to restore womanhood to its former status, privileges and enlightenment.

The *Fourth Great Message* of the Vedas is that our ancient ancestors were a people with democratic instincts, free from the domination of Autocrats, Plutocrats or Priestcrafts, and framed their own constitution, elected their own king, willingly paid taxes for the maintenance of the Government presided over by the king and his representative councils, withheld the payment of their taxes, if the Government failed to discharge its duties properly, and even deposed the king when he proved to be tyrannical or oppressive. Our present English rulers miss no opportunity for continually dinning into our ears that the democratic spirit never existed in the Indian people, and it is they who have been introducing democratic institutions for the first time in Indian soil, and that our people must pass through a long period of tutelage under them before they could think of having fully developed democratic institutions of their own. I have no hesitation in saying that the Vedas give a lie direct to these assumptions. Let me give the translation of a few passages of the Vedas in support of my assertion. In the Rigveda (x. 124, 8) we come across the passage *Viso na rājānam vrinānd*, which means "like people or subjects choosing or electing a king." There is another hymn (Rv. x. 173) which indicates that the stability of a king on the throne was contingent on the good will of his subjects. Below I give the translation of a few Rigvedic verses, as made by Prof. Wilson :

"I (the priest) have consecrated thee (Raja) ; come amongst us, be steady and unvacillating : *May all thy subjects desire thee (for their king) ; may the kingdom never fall from thee.*

"Come into this (kingdom), *mayest thou be never deposed ; unvacillating as a mountain, stand firm here ; like Indra, establish thy kingdom in this world.*

"With a constant oblation, we handle the constant Soma ; therefore *may Indra render thy subject people payers of (their) taxes.*"

The Atharva-veda, though much later than the Rigveda in point of time, has the following *mantras* (iii. 4, 2, 3) :

*"The tribesmen shall elect thee for the kingship.*

*These five celestial regions shall elect thee.*

*Kinsmen, inviting thee, shall go to meet thee.*

*With thee go Agni as an active herald.*

*Let women and their sons be friendly-minded.*

*Thou, mighty one, shalt see abundant tribute."*

The last but one line goes to show that the voices of women also counted, and were an important factor in moulding public opinion, represented through their sons, as they took an intelligent interest in the welfare of the State.



As it is quite natural for us to attribute the same custom to our Gods as to ourselves, we come across the following remarkable passage in the *Aitareya Brâhmana* (i. 14): "The Devas said, 'it is on account of our having no king that the Asuras defeat us. Let us elect a king.' All consented. *They elected Soma their king.* Headed by king Soma, they were victorious in all directions." There is also a similar significant passage in the *Taittiriya Brâhmana* (i. 5, 9) which I refrain from quoting here.

In Vâlmiki's *Râmâyana* (ii. 2), we find king Dasaratha summoning the Popular Assembly for obtaining the sanction of his people to his nomination of Râma as his successor. In the *Mahâbhârata* (Santi Parva, Ch. 67) also, we find the people electing Manu as their king, and promising willing subordination to him and the voluntary payment of taxes, or certain shares of their produce, into the Royal Treasury, in return for their protection and good Government. Down to the age of the Buddha, the elective principle was in force among the various Sâkya clans, and *Vox populi* was looked upon as *Vox Dei*.

From these brief references you will find that the spirit of democracy is ingrained in the very nature of the Indo-Aryans, and it is only adverse circumstances that have been instrumental in smothering it for a time. If we would only study the Vedas and our ancient literature and history, we should be able to draw inspiration from them in our activities for resuscitating this moribund nation into new life and vigour.

The *Fifth Great Message* of the Vedas is that we can build a Greater India and spread Aryan culture all over the world as our ancient ancestors did in the Vedic times, uplifting the human race, and as was done by Buddhist missionaries going abroad from India in still later times. The Rigvedic Panis, Vaniks or Aryan merchants visited the then known world in their merchant-ships, which the Rigveda makes frequent mention of, bringing wealth into our country from abroad and spreading Aryan culture in the Deccan, Mesopotamia, Phœnicia and Egypt. Prof. Nilsson has discovered relics of an ancient civilisation on the coasts of far-off Norway, which he surmises to have been taken there by traders who resembled the Hindus (*Prehistoric Times* pp. 67-71). It has also been surmised that Aryan traders visited China, Japan, and probably far-off America in subsequent times, establishing colonies and spreading Aryan culture among various peoples. This spirit of adventure and missionary enterprise continued down to the latest Buddhistic age, when our ancestors founded colonies and built beautiful edifices and temples in Java, Siam, Cambodia, Champa and even in parts of Western Asia, where the relics of a wonderful civilisation still bear eloquent testimony to their enterprise and humanitarian activities. This spirit of enterprise was subsequently cramped by illiberal laws and narrow restrictions that sought to maintain



the purity of the Aryan people by isolating them from the contact and contamination of the outer world, and of those communities in India itself, which were mostly non-Aryan and regarded as "untouchables." The inevitable result was the division of the Indian People into innumerable castes, classes, sects and tribes, each isolated from and independent of the other, with no internal cement or cohesion. This spirit of division and isolation was carried even into the main Aryan castes, until at the present day we find each caste intersected into several sub-divisions, each disjointed from the other, which do not inter-dine or inter-marry. The work of disintegration was further accelerated by the forging of new social and religious fetters, which restrained national activities and reduced the nation to a nation of slaves. These easily and naturally paved the way for foreign domination, and to-day we witness the sorry spectacle of a mighty nation rolling in the mire of social, moral, spiritual and political degradation, quite helpless and powerless to regain its ancient footing. We can never aspire to be a free and united nation, unless and until we discard the bonds and barriers, mostly self-imposed, that separate us from one another and have crushed out our very life and reduced us to helots and galley-slaves.

The *Sixth Great Message* of the Vedas is that we should look to the land as the source of our wealth and support, and betake ourselves to agriculture in right earnest, adopting, of course, the present improved scientific methods, and manufacture all the necessities of our life including our clothing. The Vedic Aryans were eminently an agricultural people, possessing vast herds of cattle which were regarded as wealth, and manufacturing everything that they required for their use. We are at the present day sorely in need of sufficient food-grains for our daily consumption and also of nourishing milk for ourselves and our children. Theoretically we pose ourselves as the worshippers of the "Cow-Mother" (*Gābhi-Mātā* or *Gābhi-Devatā*), but in practice we are probably the worst sinners against her in the present civilised world. Agriculture, Cattle-rearing, and Industries were the principal occupations of our ancient ancestors; but, under the influence of morbid sentimentalism in a later age, we relegated them all to the illiterate masses, with the deplorable result that they have deteriorated sadly in their hands, and the nation is now going half starved, half naked, without any nourishment, and entirely dependent upon other nations for the necessities of their life. We have to get over our morbid sentiments and prejudices, and should be ready now to put our hands to the plough, irrespective of caste or social position, and to rear up noble breeds of milch-cows. Look at the tender and humane feelings, and the solicitude and anxiety that our Aryan ancestors felt and expressed in their many hymns to the Devas for the protection and safety of their kine, which they came to look upon as *Devatās*. (Rv. vi. 28). Let us take this important message of the Vedas to heart,



if we really want to survive as a nation and be a self-contained people, independent of any extraneous help for our support.

The *Seventh Great Message* of the Vedas is that we have got to know ourselves and realise Brahman in our souls, and through Brahman, the unity of the human race, and thus to effect our emancipation from the bonds of superstitions that serve only to retard our spiritual progress and prevent us from living up to the highest ideals of true manhood. We should learn to see God in everything and everything in God. Our love of God should be as wide as the Universe itself, comprising within its vast compass not only humanity as a whole, without any distinction of race, caste or creed, but also life in every shape and form; and our mind and soul should be saturated with a world-wide good-will and compassion for all living creatures, such as the great Buddha felt and taught to mankind, and such as our Rsis and Sannyásis sacrificed and are still sacrificing everything to cultivate and realise. This is the greatest of all the Messages of the Vedas, and the world is now eagerly waiting to receive it. But it is we who have to deliver it, and by delivering it, bring peace and happiness among the human races who, in their mad pursuit after self-aggrandisement, have been, at the present moment, cutting each other's throats, like brute savages, and thwarting, oppressing, and annihilating each other. If we are to assume once again the role of world-teachers after the manner of our glorious ancestors, we have to go through a long process of self-denying, rigorous discipline, such as is inculcated by the rules of *Brahmacharya*, and after realising the great spiritual truths through clear intuition, should be prepared to sacrifice everything, and lay down our very lives for accomplishing the good of the world.\*

## BUDDHA'S METHOD OF TEACHING

BY RAMAN CHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA, B.A.

"Can you, O Lord," enquired the bereaved mother, "can you give life to the dead?"

"Yes, mother, I can," replied the Compassionate One.

"You can revive the dead!"—A cry of joy went out of her. She placed her dead child at the feet of the Master and entreated him to restore its life.

The gracious head nodded acquiescence. The light of hope suffused her countenance.

"But," the Lord said, "you must get me something."

\* From his address as President of the Saraswata Sammelana and the Veda Sammelana of the Gurukula University in connection with the Silver Jubilee celebration on the 16th March, 1927.



"Anything the Blessed One commands. There is nothing dearer to me than my child,—I can give my life for it."

"I want a handful of sesame seeds."

"Oh, that is easy!"

"A handful from a home where none has ever died."

The mother hurried away to get the sesame seeds. She stopped at the first door and begged for them. The mistress of the house readily gave her a handful.

"But has any of your house ever died?"

"Many, mother," was the mournful reply.

She did not wait. At the next door the same doleful reply met her eager enquiry. And thus she went on anxiously seeking a house where death had not visited, till her feet were tired and sore and she could walk no more. Then suddenly the truth flashed in her mind. Calm and peace filled her heart. The secret of death was now within her comprehension and the meaning of the Lord's action became clear.

So simple and dramatic and yet so practical was the method of the Lord's teaching! The wisdom of it was that it did not attempt to deal with the enquirer's crude and defective thoughts in a learned way. It carried the enquirer imperceptibly to a finer world of perception. It forced the enquirer to look within himself for the light to penetrate the dark mysteries of life and death. A great teacher is also a great artist.

The Lord did not favour useless argumentation. But he had to meet the sophists of the day. It was an age when no less than sixty-two religious orders contended with each other chiefly on philosophical grounds; and the vanquished had to accept as a disciple the doctrines of the victor. In that age villagers would erect *Paribbājakārāms* and *Kutuhala-sāḷās* and invite there the thinkers and leaders of various religious orders for philosophical discussions. "In no other age and country do we find so universally diffused among all classes of the people so earnest a spirit of enquiry, so impartial and deep a respect for all who posed as teachers, however contradictory their doctrines might be."<sup>3</sup> The times demanded great proficiency in logic; and the Lord preferred a Socratic position.

Whenever a questioner approached him, the aim of Gotama was to find out if he had come with a preconceived theory or dogma regarding the question. "What do you think of it?" he would ask the enquirer. The answer would give him an idea of the enquirer's mental position.<sup>4</sup> He would take up the answer and analyse it, and by questionings and cross-questionings, push the questioner by degrees to his own conclusion. Gotama was wise enough not to commit himself to anything. "So you see," he would conclude, "your last word does not tally with your first, your first with your last."

<sup>1</sup> *Brahmajāla Sutta*.

<sup>2</sup> *Paribbajaka*—a wandering monk; *Aram*—resting place; *Kutuhala*—curiosity; *Sala*—hall.

<sup>3</sup> Rhys Davids: *Buddhism*, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. "Gotama puts himself as far as possible in the mental position of the questioner. He attacks none of his cherished convictions."—*Dialogues of the Buddha* by Rhys Davids, p. 206.



King Ajatasatru of Magadha approached the Lord with a question and respectfully begged his permission to put it to him.

"Ask, O King, whatsoever you desire," the Blessed One said.

The King gracefully put his question.

"Do you admit to us, O King, that you have put the same question to other recluses or to Brahmanas?"

"I do, Lord."

"Then tell us how they answered it, if you do not mind."

"I have no objection where the Blessed One and others like him are." And the King proceeded to describe at length the answers he received from other teachers. The Lord listened to him to the end, and then asked him :

"But what do you think, O King, that being so, is there or is there not, some fruit, visible in this world, of the life of a recluse?"<sup>5</sup> The King gave his answer. The questions and answers went on till the questioner reached his conclusion and was satisfied. The dignity of the method can hardly be overestimated. The efficiency of it was profound.

Nigganthaputta was pushed to the conclusion that his theory about Atma was faulty. "But, what then is the truth according to you?" he asked. But the Buddha would not answer this question. He kept himself clean of any dogma. When the questioner was really disposed to receive truth, that is, when he, as the result of a discussion, had reached the stage of a *Srotāpanna*,<sup>6</sup> the Buddha would call his attention to the discipline enunciated by him. "It is vain," he would say, "it is vain to consider the origin and the elements of fire, when you are actually in it. It is for you to come out of it as soon as possible."

Mālunkyaṇḍita of the Order was once troubled by many unprofitable doubts. "These theories," he reflected, "which the Blessed One has left unelucidated, has set aside and rejected,—that the world is eternal, that the world is not eternal, that the world is finite, that the world is infinite, that the soul and the body are identical, that the soul is one thing and the body another, that the saint exists after death, that the saint does not exist after death, etc. etc.—these the Blessed One does not elucidate to me. And the fact that the Blessed One does not elucidate them to me does not please me or suit me."

His mind was much agitated and he drew near the Lord. He put the question to him and added that "if the Blessed One would not elucidate to him, either that the world is eternal, or that the world is not eternal, . . . or that the saint neither exists nor does not exist after death, in that case he would abandon religious training and return to the life of a layman." "If the Blessed One does not know the answers," he remarked, "the only upright thing for one who does not know, or who has not that insight, is to say, 'I do not know; I have not that insight.'"

"Pray, Mālunkyaṇḍita," calmly began the Lord, "did I ever say to you, 'Come, Mālunkyaṇḍita, lead the religious life under me, and I will

<sup>5</sup> *Samannaphala Sutta* translated by Rhys Davids.

<sup>6</sup> *Srota*—current; *Apanna*—Taken to.



elucidate to you either that the world is eternal, or that the world is not eternal, . . . or that the saint neither exists nor does not exist after death'?"

"Nay, verily, Reverend Sir."

"Or did you ever say to me, 'Reverend Sir, I will lead the religious life under the Blessed One on condition that the Blessed One elucidate to me either that the world is eternal or that the world is not eternal etc.'?"

"Nay, verily, Reverend Sir."

" . . . Mālunkyaṇḍita, any one who should say 'I will not lead the religious life under the Blessed One until the Blessed One shall elucidate to me either that the world is eternal, or that the world is not eternal etc.' that person would die, Mālunkyaṇḍita, before the Tathāgata had ever elucidated this to him.

"It is as if, Mālunkyaṇḍita, a man had been wounded by an arrow thickly smeared with poison, and his friends and companions, his relatives and kinsfolk, were to procure for him a physician or surgeon; and the sick man were to say, 'I will not have this arrow taken out until I have learnt whether the man who wounded me belonged to the warrior caste, or to the Brahman caste, or to the agricultural caste or to the menial caste.'

"Or again he were to say, 'I will not have this arrow taken out until I have learnt whether the man who wounded me was tall, or short, or of the middle height'

"Or again he were to say, 'I will not have this arrow taken out until I have learnt whether the bow which wounded me was a cāpa or a kodanda.'

"The religious life, Mālunkyaṇḍita, does not depend on any dogma, on the finitude or infinitude of the world or the soul. Whether the dogma obtain, Mālunkyaṇḍita, that the world or soul is eternal or that the world or soul is not eternal, there still remain birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief and despair, for the extinction of which in the present life I am prescribing.

"All that is unprofitable I have not elucidated . . . and what, Mālunkyaṇḍita, have I elucidated? Misery have I elucidated; the origin of misery have I elucidated; the cessation of misery and the path leading to the cessation have I elucidated. And why, Mālunkyaṇḍita, have I elucidated this? Because Mālunkyaṇḍita, this does profit, has to do with the fundamentals of religion and tends to aversion, absence of passion, cessation, quiescence, knowledge, supreme wisdom and Nirvāṇa. . . ."

The discontent was gone and the venerable Mālunkyaṇḍita applauded the speech of the Blessed One.<sup>7</sup>

The dialogue helps us to see into Buddha's attitude, his matter-of-fact disposition and his aversion for unprofitable discussion.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Condensed from Warren's *Buddhism in Translation*.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. "Gotama, the recluse, holds aloof from . . . wrangling phrases."—*Brahmajāla Sutta*.



To meet the well-tutored sophists of his day, Buddha propounded four dialectic methods :

- (1) *Paṭipucchā-vyākaraṇīya*
- (2) *Ekamsa-vyākaraṇīya*
- (3) *Vibhaṅga-vyākaraṇīya*
- (4) *Thaṇaṇīya*

By the first method, he used to lead the questioner to his conclusion by questionings and cross-questionings. This method has already been dwelt on at length. The second method he would resort to when he would give a direct reply to the question of an enquirer without entering into a discussion with him. Sometimes the Lord would analyse a complicated question and answer it piecemeal. This was his third method. There were dogmatic sophists again. They had to be disentangled from their false preconceptions. With suitable questions the Lord would elucidate to them the shortcomings and vagaries of their dogmas, as he did in the case of Niggaṇṭhaputta mentioned above. This method was called *Thaṇaṇīya*.<sup>9</sup>

And this was not all. He had many more less distinctive methods of teaching his disciples in the Order. A single line of training does not suit all temperaments. Buddha understood this perfectly well. To the Panchavaggiyas, the first five disciples, he denounced asceticism, to Mahākāśapa he applauded it. He would not allow Devadatta to make such ascetic rules as would be binding on all the monks of the Order.

Parables and stories played a prominent part in his discussions. A profound sympathy for the enquirers always distinguished his instructions. A brother of the Order, failing in his repeated efforts to subdue carnal passions, lamented much. When he was brought before the Lord, the Lord solaced him by repeating to him a story of one of his own past births. He, in that birth, lived on the Himalayas as an ascetic. Once he came down to visit the kingdom of Benares. The king of Benares was struck with his glorious appearance and requested him to live in his capital. A house was built for him in a pleasant garden and he took his residence there. Every day he went through the air to receive his food in the palace. After a time the king was absent from the capital on some account, and the queen had to look after the saint's comforts. And by and by the saint became entangled in the charms of the queen. He lost all his powers and grace. When the king came back, he spoke to him of his sad plight and again retired to the Himalayas for harder austerities.<sup>10</sup> "If the would-be Buddha," the Blessed One concluded, "could be so smitten by *kāma*, you have no reason to lament." The brother was cheered up to fight the battle anew.

"Take a man where he stands, and give him a push upwards," says Swami Vivekananda. The great teacher of the sixth century B. C. was also wise enough to follow this most efficacious method of teaching. Śrīgāla, after his bath, saluted all the quarters of the earth. Being

<sup>9</sup> Vide *Spread of Buddhism* by Dr. N. Datta, M.A. Ph.D.

<sup>10</sup> *Saṅkalpa-jātaka*.



questioned by the Buddha, he stated that his deceased father had asked him to do so.<sup>11</sup> The wise Lord did not smile at the crudity of the idea. He took the man where he stood and advised him to salute the guardian deities of the quarters. He led him from darkness to some light,—he gave him a push upwards.

## A FRENCH CRITIC ON THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT

"I turn to men and women of good faith, believing themselves genuine Christians yet following the teaching of Vedanta and adhering to the postulate,—much in vogue to-day,—that all religions are of equal value ; and I feel it my duty to warn them that even lavish homage paid to Christ simply as an avatar among the others,—Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster, Mohammed,—ought not to make them forget that this is the first step on the road to dechristianization."

These strange words were uttered in the pages of the *Forum* of New York by M. Jules Bois, an eminent philosopher and litterateur of France. M. Bois has been contributing a series of articles in that well-known monthly on the New Religions of America. His contribution in the March number was on the Hindu Cults. Our readers are aware that since Swami Vivekananda's triumph in the Chicago Parliament of Religions, the Vedanta movement has been making steady head-way in the New World. We have now six well-established centres there. M. Bois appears to have visited some of them and closely followed their activity, for he gives a generally correct description of their ideals and work in his article. He however has concluded his essay with certain observations which show that he has missed their true import, and which therefore require to be examined.

M. Bois' name is not quite unfamiliar to our readers. In the March of 1925, we had the pleasure of publishing a poem by him on Swami Vivekananda, in course of which he thus addresses the Swami :

The angles of Vinci turn away, jealous,  
So much infinite science irradiates around your brow.

<sup>11</sup> *Sigalaravada Sutta.*



Purity meditates within your eyes where fools see madness. . . .  
 You the initiator, sweet like Evening,  
 O my fervor unique, O brother, O master,  
 You the prophet who proclaimed solely the Ideal,  
 Hail to you! my thanks! for, I drew from your sidereal heart  
 And from your songs, the august strength, indispensable,  
 In order to scorn the world, yet to love the earth.

Before that in our March issue of 1918, we published an English translation of the eighth chapter of his book *Visions de l'Inde*, which he has named *L'Extase*, "The Ecstasy," and which contains an account of his visit to the Belur monastery, the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Order. In fact M. Bois was well acquainted with Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda had passed some weeks in his house as his guest, in the year 1900, and had him as one of his companions during his travel in Eastern Europe and the Near East later on. Swami Vivekananda thus writes of him in his *Memoirs of European Travel* :

Monsieur Jules Bois is a famous writer; he is particularly an adept in the discovery of historical truths in the different religions and superstitions. He has written a famous book putting into historical form the devil-worship, sorcery, necromancy, incantation and such other rites that were in vogue in Mediæval Europe and the traces of them that obtain to this day. He is a good poet, and is an advocate of the Indian Vedantic ideas that have crept into the great French poets, such as Victor Hugo and Lamartine and others, and the great German poets, such as Goethe, Schiller and the rest. M. Jules Bois is very modest and gentle, and though a man of ordinary means, he very cordially received me as a guest into his house in Paris. . . .

From his poem and from what he has said in his *Visions de l'Inde* and in the *Forum* article, we feel that M. Bois entertains a high regard for the Swami. The way in which he has depicted our ideals and activities is certainly generous. He has a good word to say of our Swamis in America, and quotes "the declaration of our faith" from the introductory page of Swami Vivekananda's *Raja Yoga* :

Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work or worship or psychic control or philosophy,—by one or more or all of these,—and be free. This is the whole of religion; doctrines, dogmas, rituals, books, temples, and forms are but secondary details.

He also quotes Swami Paramananda, "the best known present-day Swami" :



We believe firmly that the revelations of the saints and sages and seers everywhere are one. God is One, Spirit is One. We are all children of that One; and we cannot serve that One and love that One unless our love makes us include all His children,—east, west, north, south, everywhere. To uphold this unity is the chief aim of our work.

One would think that these are quite good ideas and no illumined mind would take exception to them. Yet M. Bois thinks that these would have dire consequences on the American mind.

We have seen from the words of Swami Vivekananda that M. Bois was keenly observing the influence of Vedanta on the modern European literature. The Vedanta philosophy had been much in his mind even before he met Swami Vivekananda. He says: "When the Congress of Religions was in progress in Chicago, I, in Paris, eagerly followed its debates. One declaration which arrested my attention was that of the young Hindu prophet promulgating a 'universal religion.'" This dwelt in his mind and then in 1900 he was one day suddenly invited to meet the Swami at the home of a rich American friend in Paris. What happened next is best narrated in his own words:

After an informal conference Vivekananda approached me as though we had known each other for a long time. A brief conversation followed, at the end of which he startled me by proposing to come and live with me. Expressing my sense of the honour his suggestion implied, I reminded him of the luxury and attention he was enjoying and explained that I was only a young writer who could offer him very little in the way of comfort.

"I am a monk and a mendicant," was the reply. "I can sleep on the ground or on the floor. Our luxury will be the wisdom of the masters. I will bring my pipe with me, and upon its incense will rise the verses of the Vedas and Upanishads."

Next day the Swami arrived with a small valise.

Upto that time M. Bois had associated with Brahmans, Buddhists, pundits, and sannyasins, but he had met none so exceptional as the Swami. He found the divine spark grow effulgent in him. Says M. Bois:\*

Through his life the old wisdom of India spoke to me. In the tradition of the Orient, oral initiation is more important than reliance upon the written word. The Asiatic has disciples while we have pupils. His conviction is that knowledge, like the secrets of the heart, is to be transmitted only at the favorable moment.

\* We are indebted to the Editor, *Forum*, for permission to quote from M. Bois' article.—Editor, P.B.



At that time I was living in the rue Gazan, facing the Parc Montsouris. There, far from the hum and drum of the city, the days flowed by in unbroken calm and a quasi-solitude. From the balcony one looked out over a miniature Switzerland of hills, valleys, and artificial lakes bathed in radiant sunlight. At the close of the day, after having attended to my own affairs, I would find Vivekananda there, scarcely having moved from the spot where I had left him, but having smoked and meditated much. This monk of Shiva had gone up and down the earth, preaching his alluring but terrible gospel, proclaiming the illusion of the external world and our personality, and the reality of one single Being behind the multiform appearance of things and creatures. Marvelous evenings in the pure intoxication of metaphysics and nature! The perfume of young flowers and the grave Hindu plain-song; a Parisian spring and a breeze from the Ganges; the semi-obscure glamour of the stars, while the messenger of the old Barattha, with his dark nimbus of hair, his imposing carriage, his prominent eyes now widely open, now veiled by heavy lids, sat like a Buddha of the Himalayas transported to a suburb on the Seine. It was not the India of the fakirs and the cranks, but the magical land of beauty and wisdom. And the five yogas, transmitted from time immemorial by the *guru* (master) to the *chela* (disciple) revealed once more, this time to a young French poet, their methods for the experimental union of the individual with himself first and then with the divine.

It would take too long to give even a slight account of this psychological teaching, which is preserved to a few. William James summed it up when he said, "The different yogas are based on persevering exercises; and the diet, posture, breathing, intellectual concentration, and moral discipline help the disciple to overcome the obscuration of his lower nature sufficiently to come face to face with facts which instinct and reason alone can never meet." Here I am laying stress on the human side of the teacher. Vivekananda was a loyal disciple of his master, Ramakrishna, who had been the central influence in his youth and to whom the prince of orientalisists, Max Müller, referred as "a real Mahatma." In very truth a real one, having nothing in common with those false Mahatmas whose chief claim to fame depended upon silly prodigies of legerdemain.

The Swami's emotion was profound when he told me of his first meeting with the last great saint of his race. . . .

After a long silence, and in a voice that had fallen to a whisper, my companion continued:

"He had called me Vivekananda (Happy Discrimination), but after his death I was as though mad. I felt as if I had lost my soul. I became a sannyasin, throwing aside everything, even to clothing. I traversed India on foot, covered with ashes, taking meals now with rajahs, now with the humblest peasants, sleeping on porches or in trees, bewailing the loss of my guru and vowing to render immortal the gospel I had received from him. When I felt morally strengthened by this sacrificial wandering, I set out for America. There my lectures permitted me to amass a certain sum which does not belong to me. It is in the



hands of an American friend and will be devoted to the monastery of Ramakrishna near the Ganges, and then I too shall die."\*

That evening I had the intuition that the prophesy would not be long of fulfilment. Death was already hovering over Vivekananda; quite visibly it was doing its work within his robust body, broken by too arduous efforts. I took him to the best doctors in Paris, but they shook their heads.

We left the city at the moment when it was in gala attire for the great exposition in 1900. En route toward Jerusalem and Benares, with chosen companions, we visited Constantinople, Greece, and Egypt. At Port Said we parted. The monk of Shiva took the steamer for India, while I decided to sail for Palestine to spend Christmas in Bethlehem. Vivekananda's road led to Nirvana, mine to Calvary.

M. Bois next met the Swami at Belur. It will not be out of place to reproduce extracts from the account of that visit, as it appeared in translation in our issue of March, 1918:

We have fled past the town. The docks with their length of twelve English miles have come to an end. The water of the Ganges are rising around us, and a favourable tide is carrying us towards the monastery all white—in its palmgrove—over which rises the trident of the Pagoda—the monastery beckons to us from its complaisant terraces.

The American lady has become grave. She remembers having heard at New York this Vivekananda who charms the Souls. She agreed at once when I asked her to accompany me. She is an indefatigable traveller. I was presented to her at Paris during the Exposition (Exhibition). We met since at Cairo and again in Calcutta, yesterday, before the Great Eastern Hotel. I recognised her by her steely glance and her profile—chaste and insatiate. "How small is the world," she cried. "The earth is only a crossway where wanderers cross each other." Vivekananda is standing on the terrace. His big eyes seemed to have eaten up his visage.

This man—with almost a swarthy complexion—and dressed as the Aryans of six thousand years ago—born so far from my corner of the earth—speaking another tongue and adoring another God has been my best friend. . . . He incarnated for me—with his genius and his perilous frenzy—that India which I cherish as the fatherland of my dreams—the Eden where lives the Ideal. . . .

These are the first words at the threshold of his house—"I am free, my friend—I am liberated anew. I have given all. The money weighed me down like chains. I am now the poorest man in the poorest country in the world. But the House of Ramakrishna has been built and his spiritual family has received a shelter."

He saw the American and saluted her with a gentle gesture which has become in the West the attitude of prayer—the hands joined—the

\* It is doubtful if the Swami has been correctly reported here,—for there are certain inaccuracies of statement which could scarcely be due to the Swami.—*Editor, P.R.*



head inclined. It is thus in the images—the spouses of the Hindu Gods are represented before the celestial masters.

Then he presented us to his people saying—"Behold my brothers and my children," under their splendid turbans—the young men smiled at us—with still ingenuous eyes of the apprentices of life. The old people snatched themselves off from their meditation of the Vedas—their bent foreheads marked with the Shivaic Symbol. Sudras—Brahmans—and Parrias also were united here, as, for the Prophet the caste is abolished. God is equally present in all. He took a *narghilé* (Hooka pipe) which a disciple was smoking and drew from it a puff which perfumed the air round as with an odour of the rose. Then he gave us some lotus flowers.—"Come upon the terraces" said he, "my friends are about to prepare the tiffin." (In Anglo-India they call thus, the repast of the middle of the day.) From there we saw the most moving spectacle. It was India—her fields fresh under the burning sun—the ponds like some mirrors which a goddess might have let fall in her flight—the forests (from afar) soft like velvet fleece—and the Ganges like a virile arm which folds the earth—in love.

On the other side of the stream a pagoda reared its spire. Near it a great banian tree spread its enormous branches which striking the descending roots into the soil had transformed themselves into separate trees.—Under its shade my master Ramakrishna entered for the first time into "Samadhi," that is to say—into an ecstasy in which he was merged into the Godhead. For us the spot is as sacred as the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya, near which Gautama became conscious of his mission.

Half an hour afterwards—in his cell Vivekananda himself served us the "tiffin" which consisted of eggs, fresh milk, aromatic grains and mangoes—fruits which were to us more exquisite than peaches. But he himself could not sit with us. He begged to be excused for not giving us meat. The monastery made no use of it.

Strange apartment this of the Swami where the nude simplicity of a Hindu anchorite was mixed up with the practical furniture of a Western philosopher—rocking chair, a library of varied works where Emerson and Spencer肘ed the indigenous publications gathered in rolls.

A disciple offered us some betels in a green leaf. They all came from the monastery garden where they had been gathered. I chewed. A taste of nicotine and flower filled my mouth—my teeth became red.

"Narcotics are smoked or chewed all over India" said the Sanyasi with a smile. "For us, life is a dream and what you call dream among yourselves is for us the sole reality. All that are for you true, veritable and real—because of their visible and tangible attribute are, for us a sport of Maya—a mere Illusion—that which changes and passes away is not worth the trouble of being loved—nor even of being looked at. The cities, the luxury, and the glories, the civilisations and the prodigies of material science—we have known them all for centuries and we are disgusted with the usage. Childish sports devised for children.

"We are awakened from the brutalising dream of which you are still under the influence. We shut the eyes, retain our breath and sit under the soft shadow of the trees in front of the primitive fire. The



infinite then opens to us the marvellous doors and we enter into the inner world which is the only truth. There—see for yourself. These are few Europeans who have penetrated these mysteries.”

We leaned towards the window of the cell. A clock struck. In the garden under an Indian fig tree the monks were seated in a circle. They balanced the head and the back in a rhythmic movement. He who had just accompanied us sang in a strange voice—recalling our plain-chant but more strident and more joyous. In the centre a fire burnt away into grey cinders. At the side of the fire the trident of Shiva was planted dressed in garlands, all fixed their eyes upon the flame where dwelt the divinity. A great peace soared up from the organisms hypnotised by the igneous soul—a peace frightful to us whom activity turns tipsy—a peace from which rose up the chant as on a sonorous wing—and the golden bees danced over the ecstatic heads in streaks of sunlight, while from inside the sacred stables the cows raised their venerable heads associating themselves with the strange cult in which man re-enters into universal nature and is annihilated without death.

After all this, the conclusion of the *Forum* article comes as a surprise. This is what M. Bois writes :

As to the writer of this essay, his conclusions, confirmed in his own life, may be summed up in a few words :

*First*, these ancient oriental creeds and forms, venerable without doubt and deserving of an impartial and thoughtful examination, pertain more to critical science than to religion proper. We have passed beyond them. Practically speaking, they distil, almost without exception, a metaphysical drug which, if one is not cautious, may be deleterious to the soul. The trouble lies in idealistic pantheism, monism, complete identification of the individual with the absolute,—“That art thou” interpreted by certain Upanishads as “I am God.” As has been remarked by a Hindu sage,—Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore, the father of the poet,—if the worshipper and the worshipped are identical, if God and man are one and the same substance, whom and what can we worship and pray to? Religion is canceled.

*Second*, I turn to men and women of good faith, believing themselves genuine Christians yet following the teaching of Vedanta and adhering to the postulate,—much in vogue to-day,—that all religions are of equal value; and I feel it my duty to warn them that even lavish homage paid to Christ simply as an avatar among the others,—Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster, Mohammed,—ought not to make them forget that this is the first step on the road to dechristianization. If they wish to remain true Christians they must believe that Christ is, as Browning said, “the Son of God and the very God.” Outside this creed we revert to chaos, in religion and in society as well. Roosevelt stated on impregnable fact when declaring that the man who loves all women as much as his wife, loves in reality neither his wife nor the other women. Similarly, he who dabbles in all religions is soon unable to profit by any.

To Vivekananda I owe much in human enlightenment. In his company for months I enjoyed the unique privilege of having met in one



man something of Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and perhaps of Buddha himself. To him I am indebted, by contrast, for a deeper adoration of the Christian truth. In the efforts we made together to tear away, by the mere force of mind, the unliftable veil, I became convinced of the futility and insufficiency of human reason confronting the absolute. Despair is at the end of Stoicism, however heroic it may be. The early teaching which my mother whispered to me stood out as holding more practical wisdom, in its impulses of simple faith and homely love, than all the dicta of the greatest sages.

These final remarks of M. Bois deserve some notice. His first point is that the Westerners have passed beyond "these" oriental creeds and forms. It will not be wrong to suppose that thereby he implies that Christianity is superior to oriental religions. No reasons are given in support of this easy conclusion. The excellence of a creed is judged by its underlying philosophy and its influence on life. Can M. Bois seriously deny that oriental philosophies are at least equal to Christian theology and orientals as spiritual as the occidentals?

His second point is that oriental creeds are deleterious to the soul. We cannot judge it until we know what M. Bois means by soul. These are souls which are steeped in sensuality, glory in earthly things and are afraid of the higher truths of the Spirit. To such, we admit, oriental creeds are dangerous,—not "these" oriental creeds only, but also the other creed of the oriental Jesus who, if we have understood the New Testament aright, was not less violently against the desires of the flesh. It appears however that M. Bois did not always think of oriental creeds in this amiable light. For in the Chapter VIII of his *Visions de l'Inde*, which he has named *L'Extase*, he thus speaks of Swami Vivekananda and India: "He incarnated for me—with his genius and his perilous frenzy—that India which I cherish as the Fatherland of my dreams—the Eden where lives the Ideal." Even in the forepart of the present essay he is gracious enough to remark:

"May it not be said that the East was predestined to stimulate the West, which was dozing in well-being, led into selfishness and materialism by the lust of lucre and conquest? . . . While we endeavour to prevail in Asia, she has something to say in protest, something we might profit by, did we but know how to hear it in a calm and critical spirit, disentangling the useful from the fanciful in this gigantic mass of learning. If Asiatic myths and metaphysics are sometimes for us merely historic documents, their marvelous explorations of the soul, their soaring scientific conjectures, are an inspiration for our earth-bound psychology and hesitant hypotheses."



("We have passed beyond them" indeed !)

It seems to us that these statements rather contradict his first conclusion. But we may be mistaken.

Be that as it may, one reason that he vouchsafes for considering oriental creeds dangerous is that monism—the doctrine of the identity of the individual with the universal—makes worship impossible. We may well retort, how is worship possible without assuming the identity of the worshipper with the object of worship? Can two *seperate* units be ever united in prayer or love? In fact in India even dualistic worship assumes the fundamental identity of the worshipper and the worshipped. M. Bois can profitably consult on this point Arthur Avalon's books on Tantra. We may inform him that in spite of Devendranath Tagore and others of his opinion, monistic *sadhana* has prevailed in India for millenniums, from the ancient days of the Vedas down to the present day, and with astonishing success. Monists are not deluded fools. The difficulty of M. Bois and other such critics arises out of their ignorance of and prejudice against the meaning and truths of monism. But supposing monism makes worship impossible, it does not follow that *all* oriental creeds are deleterious to the soul. Perhaps M. Bois does not know that monism is but one of the many creeds prevalent in India and that others are either dualistic or quasi-monistic, followed by 99 p.c. of Indians. His conclusion smacks more of the missionary dogmatism than of the calm, dispassionate and truth-loving attitude of a philosopher which he is reputed to be.

His second conclusion is against the doctrine of the harmony of religions. He is quite right in saying that he who dabbles in all religions is soon unable to profit by any. Only he mistakes *dabbling* in all religions to be harmony of religions. The realisation of the harmony of religions has two stages. In the first or the lower stage, the aspirant holds to one particular aspect of God as his Ideal, giving it his best devotions, and also respects other Ideals as being equally true as his own. As Sri Ramakrishna illustrated it, the wife loves and serves all the friends and relations of her husband, but, for him she reserves the unique love and service of her heart. This special love as applied to religion is called *Ista-nisthā*, special devotion for the chosen Ideal. Without *Ista-nisthā*, harmony of religions cannot be understood. We are not asked to dabble in all creeds. We



follow one creed specially, but honour other creeds as being equally valuable to others. It may be true that he who loves all women as much as his wife in reality loves neither. But because one loves one's wife, cannot one honour the conjugal love of others and regard it to be as precious as one's own?

We do not see therefore why it should be the first step on the road to dechristianization. We may believe that Christ is the son of God and the very God, and the same time believe that Krishna and Rama also are sons of God and the very God. There is no psychological difficulty in believing that God may have many different manifestations. If God can have three aspects, as some Christians believe, why cannot He have more than three aspects? If one can accommodate three, one can also accommodate more than three. Cannot one's wife be recognised to be the same in different dresses? When therefore we have purged our mind of fanaticism, we have reached the first stage of the harmony of religions, for then we feel that all religions are but different *aspects* of the same Divine Truth, suiting different tastes and temperaments.

Perhaps in a sense it may be dechristianization. For it will eventually destroy the present-day dogmatic, narrow and jealous Christianity. But it will not mean chaos in religion and society. It will reveal a nobler conception of life and religion, more scientific, more convincing and philosophical and more honourable.

In the second or the higher stage, one feels equal love for all religious ideals. One arrives at the centre of Truth and glories in all its aspects and expressions. This is the final goal. The lower development culminates in the higher. This ultimate Ideal is not an unsubstantial homogeneity, as is proved by the life of Sri Ramakrishna. He realised and embodied the highest ideals of all creeds; than him there was not a truer Hindu, a truer Muhammedan or a truer Christian. Bigoted Christianity may not now like this idea of religious harmony. But the progress of knowledge will make its acceptance inevitable. Christianity must either go down or accept its position as only one of many equally valid paths to the realisation of Truth. There is no other alternative.

M. Bois makes a premature statement when he observes in his final paragraph that "Despair is at the end of Stoicism, however heroic it may be." He says: "In the efforts we made



together to tear away, by the mere force of mind, the unliftable veil, I became convinced of the futility and insufficiency of human reason confronting the absolute." It is a pity M. Bois ended with despair. As for Swami Vivekananda, we *know* that he succeeded in lifting the veil long long before M. Bois met him, and that that glorious consummation was not reached through arm-chair philosophising, but through austere discipline, unflagging perseverance and most strenuous efforts. Strange that whereas even a whole life's earnest endeavour is not considered adequate to discover a few truths of external nature, it is thought that a few months' pious philosophising is enough to realise the highest and the inmost truths! M. Bois appears to have read Swami Vivekananda's *Raja Yoga*. In that certain conditions are mentioned as preliminary to the realisation of Truth. One is curious to know if M. Bois fulfilled them before he jumped into his pessimistic conclusion.

M. Bois says that he is indebted to Swami Vivekananda by *contrast* for a deeper adoration of the Christian faith. But once he was good enough to look upon him as the incarnation of his Ideal. For ourselves we do not see any real difference between Swami Vivekananda's "Stoicism" and the "Stoicism" of Jesus Christ. If "the practical wisdom" with its "simple faith and homely love" is something very different from Swami Vivekananda's "Stoicism," we are inclined to believe it has very little to do with the true teachings of Jesus, though in his name it may pass. Of course our judgment ripens with age and experience. But age also often weakens the vision and vigour of the soul, and failing to realise the Ideal, we often hoodwink ourselves by idealising the real.

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## THE ESSENCE OF VEDANTA

(Continued from page 180)

[ VEDANTASARA ]

एवम्भूतः प्रमाताधिकारी—“शान्तो दान्त” (बृ: उ: ४।४।२३)  
इत्यादि श्रुतेः । उक्तं च—

“ प्रशान्तचित्ताय जितेन्द्रियाय च  
प्रहीणदोषाय यथोक्तकारिणे ।

गुणान्वितायानुगताय सर्वदा

प्रदेयमेतत्सततं मुमुक्षवे ॥” इति

( उपदेशसहस्री ३२४, १६।७२ ) । २६

25. Such<sup>1</sup> an aspirant is a qualified student, as is said in the Sruti passages, “Quiet,<sup>2</sup> subdued” (Bri. Upa. 4. 4. 23), etc. It is further said, “This is always to be taught to one who is of tranquil mind, who has subjugated his senses, who is free from fault,<sup>3</sup> obedient,<sup>4</sup> endowed<sup>5</sup> with virtues, always submissive,<sup>6</sup> and who is eager for liberation. (Upadesha-Sahasri<sup>7</sup> 324, 16. 72)

[1 Such—Endowed with qualifications mentioned above such as Shama, Dama, etc. One commentator opines that a monk alone is qualified to receive the highest knowledge, as the householder is pre-occupied with various ritualistic functions and also because he is not entitled to listen to the highest conclusions of the Vedas. But this is rather an extreme view. The real spirit of the scripture is that complete renunciation alone is the *sine qua non* of the realisation of Truth. Sankara also in his commentary on the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad says that though utmost stress must be given on Samnyasa as the prerequisite of the highest realisation, the latter must not be made dependent upon the former.

2 Quiet etc.—The Sruti is cited as a scriptural evidence of Sama etc. being considered as prerequisites of Knowledge. The complete passage is, “तस्मादेवंविच्छान्तो दान्त उपरतिस्तिष्ठुः समाहितो भूत्वात्मन्येवात्मानं पश्यति” —“He, therefore, that knows It, after having become quiet, subdued, satisfied, patient and collected, sees self in Self.” From this passage have been taken Sama, Dama, Uparati, Titikshâ and Samâdhana of the text. The above quotation of the Bri. Upa. is according to the Kânva recension. The Mādhyandina recension substitutes ‘अद्वान्तो भूत्वा’ in place of समाधान। Therefore the author of the Vedântasâra has combined the two recensions and enumerated the six qualifications mentioned as शम, दम, etc.

The following passages from the Smṛiti and the Sruti may be cited as additional evidences.

योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते । (गीता ६।३)



"For the same Yogi, when he is enthroned in Yoga, serenity is said to be the means." (Gita 6. 3)

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियाध्यास्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ (गीता २।५८)

"When, again, as a tortoise draws in on all sides its limbs, he withdraws his senses from the sense-objects, then his wisdom becomes steady." (Gita 2. 58)

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज । (गीता १८।६६)

"Abandoning all duties, come unto Me for shelter." (Gita 18. 66)

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदा ।

आगमापायिणोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ (गीता २।१४)

"Ideas of heat and cold, of pain and pleasure, are born, O son of Kunti, only of the contact of senses with their objects. They come and go and are impermanent. Bear them patiently, O descendant of Bharata." (Gita 2. 14)

श्रद्धावांछमते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः । (गीता ४।३६)

"The man with Sraddhâ, faith, obtains wisdom and he also who has mastery over his senses." (Gita 4. 39)

मुमुक्षुर्वैशरणमहं प्रपद्ये । (श्वेतः उः ६।१८)

"Seeking for freedom I go for refuge." (Sveta. Up. 6. 18)

As regards the qualifications of the aspirant, the following beautiful passage from the *Sântiparva* of the *Mahâbhârata* may be cited :

श्रद्धान्वितायाथ गुणान्विताय परापवादाद्विरताय नित्यं ।

विशुद्धयोगाय बुधाय नित्यं क्रियावतं च क्षमिण्य हिताय ॥

विविक्तश्रीलाय विधिप्रियाय विवादहीनाय बहुभुताय ।

विजानते चैव न चाहितज्ञमे दमे च शक्ताय शमे च देयम् ॥...

\* \* \* \*

जितेन्द्रियायतदसंशयं ते भवेत्प्रदेयं परमं नरेन्द्र ॥

3 Faults—passions, etc.

4 Obedient— or the word in the text may mean one who relinquishing the Kâmya and the forbidden works performs only the daily obligatory duties and those also for the satisfaction of the Lord.

5 Endowed with etc.—Such virtues as discrimination, renunciation, forbearance, etc.

6 Submissive—Always devoted to the service of the Guru which is one of the greatest requisites for the attainment of Knowledge.

7 Upadesha-Sahasri—A treatise ascribed to Sankara.]

विषयो जीवब्रह्मैक्यं शुद्धचेतन्यं प्रमेयं तत्रैव वेदान्तानां तात्पर्यात् । २७

27. The subject<sup>1</sup> is the unity<sup>2</sup> of the individual self and



Brahman, which is of the nature of Pure Intelligence<sup>3</sup> and is to be proved. For such<sup>4</sup> is the purport of the Vedantic books.

[1 *Subject*—After dealing with the first *Anubandha*, viz. the qualifications of the aspirant, the text proceeds with the other three *Anubandhas*.

2 *Unity etc.*—The Unity of Jiva and Brahman is the essential doctrine of the Advaita Vedānta.

3 *Pure Intelligence*—The state of homogeneity wherein all attributes are transcended. The point to be proved, which is also the object of the Vedānta, is the unity and sameness of Brahman and Jiva by the elimination of their respective attributes, such as, omniscience, limited knowledge etc., superimposed by ignorance. The result will be a state of Pure Intelligence wherein all ideas of separation and variety are effaced. The word "Pure Intelligence" is mentioned in the text in order to refute the contention of the opponent that the Jiva and Brahman which are essentially different in nature may yet remain in a state of unity like milk and water.

4 *Such etc.*—Kapila, Kanāda and other philosophers conclude that the object of Vedānta is to prove the existence of Pradhāna etc. But when considered in its entirety it becomes clear that the object of Vedānta is to establish Brahman. Comp. "सर्वे वेदा यत्प्रदमामनन्ति" (कठः उः १।२।१५)—"That Word which all the Vedas declare." "वेदं सर्वं ज्ञेयमेव वेद्यः"—(गीता १५।१५)—"I am verily that which is to be known in all the Vedas."]

(To be continued)

## OPTIMISM IN INDIAN THOUGHT

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It is always convenient and necessary for logical consistency to define our terms at the outset before we deal with the subject. The word Optimism has various shades of meaning. As set forth by Leibnitz it is a doctrine which assumes that the actual world is the best of all possible worlds. It is a view that good must ultimately prevail over evil in the universe. In other words it is an attitude of mind that always tries to take a bright view of everything and is never filled with despair even in the midst of apparent failure. An optimist is full of hope and good cheer and has the fullest confidence in his own self and in the final victory of right and justice. Hope, and not fear, therefore, is his watchword.

By Indian Thought is meant the religious and philosophical speculations of the ancient Vedic religion with its six systems of philosophy, the Buddhist and the Jaina systems of thought and religious disciplines.



To a synthetic mind which discerns unity in diversity and pays more attention to the fundamental principles rather than to the superficial differences, these three main currents of thought as expounded by the highly evolved and spiritually illuminated beings have a common goal and agree to no small extent in their outlook on life and its problems. The idea of the reality of the soul, of the development of the individual soul through a chain of earth-lives, of the consummation of this process of development in the union of the individual with the universal soul and its consequent admission into a life of unimaginable peace and bliss, which found expression in the Upanishads, are more or less shared by the religions of Indian origin.

Since the Providential contact of India and England the Western savants have taken some interest in the study of Eastern thought and culture. One is pained to find that in spite of their scholarship some of them have completely misunderstood the spirit of Indian Thought. Every race has its own genius, and its ideals of life cannot be understood by an alien people unless they are studied with an open and unbiased mind. Of the many charges levelled against Indian Thought, one is that of Pessimism. It is alleged that Indian philosophy and religion hold no bright prospects before their adherents and that their outlook on life is extremely dark and gloomy. They are not inspired by their faith to lead a life of usefulness and unselfish endeavour. Nothing could be farther from the truth than this. It is a truism that the child cannot understand and sympathise with the young man, nor can the young man understand the sobering cares and anxieties of the middle-aged. The whole course of nature ordains that the older who know more will understand the younger who know less. The Western people, who are comparatively young in civilization and culture, and are still confined to the Path of Pursuit (the *Pravritti-marga*) of which we shall speak presently, know little of and care less for the other half of life, the *Nivritti-marga*, without the knowledge of which the fundamental facts of the Universe, the foundations of all existence, remain unknown.

1. The ancient Lawgiver, Manu, has laid down a code of life which is based on a complete view of world-process. He takes into consideration the action and reaction as also the interdependence of Self and Not-Self, variously called *Atma* and *Anatma*, *Purusha* and *Prakriti*, Spirit and Matter. It is just this interplay between the two which appears as the rhythmic swing spoken of under many names. The world-process is compared to a circle. One half of the circle is the arc of the descent of Spirit into Matter, and the other half is the arc of its re-ascent out of that Matter. We may speak of Spirit becoming involved in Matter, in sheaths, and then becoming evolved out of it. The first half of this process is called the Path of Pursuit (*Pravritti*) and the other half is called the Path of Return (*Nivritti*).



The Philosophical Schools (Darshanas) speak of these Paths (Margas) also. According to Manu the object of the Path of Pursuit is threefold, Duty, Profit, Pleasure (Dharma, Artha, Kama). In the Second Chapter, 224th verse, he says, "Some say that the performance of duty and the gathering of riches are 'the good'; some say wealth and sense-enjoyment; some duty only. But the well-established truth is that the three together make the end of the life of Pursuit." It might indeed be said that sense-pleasure (Kama) alone is the *summum bonum* for the arc of descent. The word means the enjoyment of the senses and the wish for those enjoyments. All our mind, all our body, instinctively runs in the direction of sense-objects.

The object of the second half is stated by Manu to be Liberation (Moksha). In Ch. VI, verse 35, he says, "Having paid off the three debts (deva, pitri and rishirina) the human being should direct the mind to Liberation. Not without discharging them in full may he desire Moksha. If he does so aspire upwards before due time, he will fall the deeper into Matter." It simply means this, that only after pursuit is renunciation possible.

On the second and final path we see that Devotion (Bhakti) in the sense of yearning after the final good leads to Power (Shakti), and that in return to Liberation (Mukti).\*

II. The second fundamental principle that we have to bear in mind in understanding the philosophy of life as enunciated by the ancient thinkers and as throwing a flood of light on the subject in hand, is the existence of an immutable and changeless law of Cause and Effect popularly called Karma. No human life is isolated. It is the child of all the lives before it, of the total aggregate of the lives that make up the continuing existence of the individual. There is no such thing as chance or as accident. Every event is linked to a preceding cause, to a following effect. All thoughts, deeds, circumstances, are causally related to the past and will causally influence the future.

This inviolable Law does by no means paralyse human will, nor does it deprive a man of his freedom of choice. This good Law works with an unerring precision on all the planes of our being, mental, moral and spiritual. Every living being is subject to it. In the Devi Bhagavata, IV, II, 8, it is said that "All, Brahma and the rest, are under its sovereign rule." So far as the Prarabdha or the ripe Karma is concerned a man is helpless, as he cannot possibly alter it. But he can certainly modify his Sanchita-Karma, that which is accumulated, a part of which is seen in the tendencies. In regard to the Kriyamana, that which is in course of making, he is absolutely free and can shape it in any form he chooses. Very great importance is, therefore, attached to Purushakara, Self-effort

\* The Science of Social Organisation by Bhagavan Das, Lecture I.



Bhishma's precious words are still ringing in our ears : "Exertion is greater than Destiny."

It is this Law that makes it possible, nay certain, for us to attain anything we earnestly desire. Is this not a sufficient reason for hope and joy? Does this not stimulate us to strenuous and persistent activity? Can there be any greater surety and guarantee of our success in any department of life?

III. In the light of this law it is easy to see how a man on the path of pursuit or on the path of return is capable of achieving anything he desires. Those who are treading the path of pursuit and are in search for the pleasures of the senses, wealth, health, name and fame, etc., if they work in right earnest in the pursuit of their object in view, they are sure to attain it in course of time.

It is now pertinent to ask whether this is a message of hope or of despair. Does this not reveal the optimistic aspect of Indian Thought, because the Hindus, the Buddhists, and the Jainas alike believe in the existence of the Law of Karma?

IV. One of the most outstanding features of Indian Thought as stated by Dr. Miller is the immanence of God and the solidarity of man. Man is not a mere particle of dust visible to-day and gone to-morrow. Contrary to the Christian doctrine, the Vedic conception of man does not find any trace of what is called the original sin in his nature. As against this view man is believed to be an *Amsa*, an essential part of God Himself. All schools of Indian Philosophy insist upon the Divine nature of man. In the words of the Upanishads, the highest product of the human mind, man is the form of being in whom the Self and the Not-Self are balanced. A *Jivatma* is *Ishvara* with name and form. We read in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, "That Immortal is hidden by existence." Again in the same Upanishad (I, vi, 3) it is said that "Life is verily the Immortal. Name and form—mere existence, by these the life is concealed."

Thus all the Upanishads are unanimous in proclaiming that *Jivatma* in essence shares the Divine characteristics, namely, that it is *Sat*, *Chit* and *Ananda*, self-existent, source of all knowledge and blissful in its nature. Therefore, by long and steady process of evolution man progresses onward and upward endlessly until he realises his oneness with the Supreme Self. By virtue of his being Divine in essence he is capable of achieving any mental or moral height he himself chooses.

We are parts of *Ishvara* limited by name and form, and the part has not at first the possibilities, or rather the actualities, of the whole. In order that we who are parts may become the whole, we enter into a temporary limitation, that therein we may conquer, that therein we may be free. Hence this material bondage. In our limited condition, we may wonder why we came hither. But none compelled us to come into this



universe. We came of our own free will, with Ishvara who willed to manifest. And because He willed to manifest we willed also. For we are part of Him. As a part we must win our freedom, until in the grossest world of matter we shall be as omnipotent, as wise, as we are in those supernal regions of our birth, where we know our own divinity and our non-separation from Ishvara.

Srijiut Bhagavan Das, in his monumental book, *The Science of Peace*, an exposition of Adhyatma-vidya, has beautifully summed up the height to which a man can climb. He says, "The Jiva that, having reached the end of the Pravritti arc of its particular cycle, thus realises the utter equality, the utter sameness and identity of all Jivas in the Supreme Self, amidst the utter diversity of the Not-Self, cries out at the overpowering wonder of it. 'The beholder seeth it as a marvel, the narrator speaketh it as a marvel, and yet after the seeing, speaking and hearing of it, none knoweth the complete detail of it.' (Bhagavad Gita ii, 29). And he also cries out at the same time, 'Where is there despondency, where sorrow, unto him who seeth the oneness?' (Isha Upanishad). He sees that all Jivas rise and fall, lower and higher, endlessly, in pseudo-infinite time and space and motion. He sees that the Jiva that is a crawling worm to-day will be the Ishvara of a great system to-morrow; and that the Jiva that is the Ishvara of a system to-day will descend into deeper densities of matter in a greater system to-morrow, to rise to the still larger Ishvaraship of a vaster system in still another Kalpa. (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, I, IV, 10)."

Further the same author continues and says, "Knowing all this, he knoweth, he cogniseth, Brahman; and loving all selves as himself, desiring their welfare as his own, and acting for their happiness as he laboureth for his own, he realiseth and is Brahman. Such an one is truly Mukta, free, delivered from all bonds; he knows and is the absolute, the self absolved from all the limitations of the Not-Self, the self wherein is absolution from all doubt and error, all wants and pains, all fevered restlessness and anxious seeking. To him belongs the everlasting peace!" Such a high conception of the progress of man is of the very essence of all optimistic systems of Indian Thought. The less bound man feels in his onward march by the trammels of human limitations, the higher do his hopes and aspirations rise. So much so that nothing can ultimately arrest or baffle his pursuit, and he may, if he himself chooses to do so, rise to the realisation of the highest in himself.

V. If it were possible to take a general survey of all mankind and their hearts we shall not have to wait long before we discover that every man, high or low, learned or ignorant, boy or adult, savage or sage, without an exception, is in search of some kind of happiness or pleasure in his own way. But the pleasure or happiness that one seeks varies not only in kind but also in value, according to his own capacity or his



place in evolution. In the words of Sri Krishna, the delights that are contact-born, are verily wombs of pain; they have beginning and end, not in them may rejoice the wise. The material enjoyment of life and the outer physical world have no permanent value. On the contrary they are fleeting and transitory.

The thoughtful people do not take long to realise that every material object is subject to change, and is, therefore, unreal, as compared to the real aspect of our existence.

It is worth our while to seriously reflect and enquire from our own selves in our calmer moments whether this earth-life is really capable of satisfying us. Cannot we see for ourselves that in the last resort it is hollow and unreal? Do the prizes for which we strive content us when we have won them? Everything that the earth can give us—health, wealth, pleasure, power, success, fame—proves to be either transient or illusory.

Once Gautama, the Buddha, addressing the Bhikkhus remarked, "This, O monks, is the sacred truth of suffering. Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unloved is suffering, to be separated from the loved one is suffering, not to obtain what one desires is suffering, in short the fivefold clinging to the earthly is suffering." This is the fourfold truth on which hinges Buddha's whole scheme of life. Let us try to set it forth in other and fewer words : (1) Life on earth is full of suffering. (2) Suffering is generated by desire. (3) The extinction of desire involves the extinction of suffering. (4) The extinction of desire (and therefore of suffering) is the outcome of a righteous life.\*

We should not forget in this connection that it is the desire for what does not belong to "self", the real self, that generates suffering; and the reason why such desire generates suffering is that what does not belong to the real self is impermanent, changeable, perishable, and that impermanence in the object of desire must needs cause disappointment, regret, disillusionment, and other forms of suffering to him who desires. The impermanence of everything earthly seems to have impressed itself deeply on Indian Thought. People live and are content to live, from year to year, and even from day to day; and they regard as permanent things that will last unchanged for a few generations or even for a few years. But the far-sighted Indian sages, looking backward and forward through vast stretches of time, saw that sooner or later everything outward, however secure of life it might seem to be, must change and fade and pass away. To the Brahmanic thinkers the impermanence of things was a proof of their unreality.\*

Buddha could say to his followers, "What you deem happiness is unworthy of the name. There are better things than these in store for



you—pure, perfect and real happiness. These will be given to you freely, if you will but win them for yourself." He who could say this (or the equivalent of this) had reached the highest conceivable level of optimism. Thus what Buddha saw at the heart of the Universe was not the darkness of sorrow, suffering and death, but the glory of Nirvana, by which, to quote Mr. Edmond Holmes, he meant "a state of ideal spiritual perfection, in which the soul, having completely detached itself by the force of its own natural expansion from what is individual, impermanent and phenomenal, embraces and becomes one with the Universal, the Eternal, and the Real." In other words "the essence of Nirvana is the finding of the ideal itself, in and through the attainment to oneness, living conscious oneness, with the all and the Divine." (*Creed of Buddha*, p. 199). Is this a message of pessimism, or of hope and joy of the life eternal that is awaiting us? I leave it to you to decide for yourself.

VI. The knowledge of Brahman as Bliss is the only "end to misery." A remarkable passage in the Taittiriya Upanishad starts from depicting the joy of a man, a youth to whom the whole world is full of wealth and who is firm and strong and well-disciplined, then this joy of man is multiplied a hundredfold and so on successively through a long list of greater and greater joys in geometrical progression, and at last reaches Brahman, who "consists of Bliss," "from whom all words return together with the mind, without having comprehended Him." (ii, 8th and 9th Anuvaka). It is the Self who possesses all the powers, whom we should truly desire to know.

The fact that everything external is a mere appearance and the reality lies only in spirit is corroborated by F. H. Bradley in these words, "Outside of spirit there is not, and there cannot be, any reality, and the more that anything is spiritual so much the more it is veritably real." The essential message of Hegel was also to the same effect. "The true life," says Fichte, "lives in the Eternal, it is a whole in every instant, the brightest life which is possible at all. The phantom life lives in the changing. The phantom life, therefore, becomes an incessant dying. It lives in dying."

The appeal to the careful consideration of the Eternal Value by Hugo Munsterberg, a German thinker, and to the Ultimate Value by J. S. Mackenzie in the books bearing the same titles, must be, I dare say, familiar to you. Have these Western thinkers while drawing our attention to ultimate and abiding state of happiness, through self-realisation, been preaching the gospel of gloom and darkness, or bliss and joy unspeakable? Does their teaching not coincide with Indian Thought on this subject?

This truth that Brahman is all is the magna charta of intellectual freedom. Let a man think, let a man speak ; never mind if he makes errors ; further knowledge will lead him on the right path. He cannot



wander outside the self, for the self is everywhere. He cannot lose the self, for the self is within him. Let the intellect soar as it will, upwards and upwards as far as its wings can beat; still far beyond his power, far across its piercing, North, South, East and West, and Zenith and Nadir, Brahman stretches everywhere, the illimitable self. Intellect cannot go outside the self, of which it is a manifestation. It cannot, therefore, shake the eternal certainty of self-existence.\* Hinduism places no fetters on the intellect; man may think as long as he can. There is no penalty on thought; there is no blasphemy in investigation. There is nothing too sacred to be challenged. Brahman is fearless. We are Brahman, how then should we fear?

That is why no one has ever been condemned for and deprived of the joy and privilege of intellectual liberty which is every man's birth-right by any school of Indian Thought. Does this sound attitude of mind point to pessimism?

Lastly let us bear in mind that there is no system of Philosophical or Religious Thought in the world which so distinctly and clearly lays down as its object the putting an end to pain by the reaching of Brahman who is Bliss as the Indian Thought does. Says Svetâsvatara Upanishad : "Until man is able to roll up the ether as leather, there will be no end to misery except through the knowing of God."

So again Sri Krishna teaches : "That should be known by the name of Yoga, this disconnection from the union with pain." And again, "Supreme Joy is for this Yogi whose mind is peaceful, whose passion nature is calmed, who is sinless and of the nature of the Eternal." In the sublime words of one of the Upanishads, "where is then grief, where delusion, for him who hath seen the oneness?"†

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Madhavananda Sails for U. S. A.

Our readers are aware of the passing away of Swami Prakashananda who was in charge of the San Francisco Vedanta Centre. Since that melancholy event the members of the Vedanta Society have been asking for another sannyasin of the Order from India to occupy his place. Swami Madhavananda, the President of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama has accordingly been put in charge of the Vedanta work at San Francisco. As President of the Advaita Ashrama for the last eight years he has shown great ability, and during this period the institution showed remarkable progress in all departments. We wish him similar success in his new sphere of activity and hope his presence will give a fresh impetus to the Vedanta work in California. Swami Vireswarananda, one of his colleagues has succeeded him as the President of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama.

\* Kamala Lectures by Dr. Annie Besant, pp. 37.

† Read at the Benares session of the Indian Philosophical Congress.



### Sri Ramkrishna Veda-Vidyalyaya

We have received a gratifying report of the Sri Ramkrishna Veda-Vidyalyaya from the Gadadhar Ashram, Bhawanipur, Calcutta, one of the centres of the Ramkrishna Order. The Vidyalyaya was started in the February of the last year with the object of teaching the Vedas and other Hindu scriptures. It received slight monetary help from some interested gentlemen and engaged an eminent scholar of Nyāya in September. In December last, in order to secure a better foundation of the school, it was decided that a committee consisting of some monks of the Order and a few representatives of the public should be formed with Prof. Surendranath Das Gupta, author of *Indian Philosophy*, as president. Accordingly, the proposed committee held its first meeting on the 9th January last, presided over by Prof. Das Gupta and decided that at present greater attention should be paid to the study of the Vedānta and other philosophies and the Bhagavatam and other Puranas, and that the study of the Samhita portions of the Vedas would be undertaken when and if earnest students came forward. The aim of the school is not only to teach the Vedic scriptures and philosophies to students, but also to spread their teachings among the general public.

It was the earnest desire of Swami Vivekananda that our ancient scriptures, especially the Vedic literature, should be made widely known among the Hindus, and in particular, the Bengalees. The Veda-Vidyalyaya is an earnest effort towards the realisation of that noble desire. We do hope that the public will render their earnest help to this infant institution.

### The R. K. Mission Students' Home, Madras

The report of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras, for the year 1926 was issued as usual on the 1st of January. The number of boarders at the end of the year was 122, of whom 25 were college students, 79 studied in the Residential High School and 20 in the Industrial Schools. The internal management was mostly in the hands of the boys, and they did their work to a perfection which evoked enthusiastic praises from all visitors. Religious classes were regularly held and due attention was paid to the physical exercise of the boys.

The Residential High School has been eminently successful; 16 out of 17 boys sent up for public examination were placed in the eligible list. To quote the words of the Dist. Educational Officer, Madras, "it is doubtful whether there is another school in Madras where boys have such splendid opportunities to study."

The mechanical engineering workshop was extended during the year at a cost of Rs. 4,326.

As regards finance, the total receipts towards recurring expenses were Rs. 45,607-13-1 and total disbursements Rs. 45,294-11. Rs. 37,216-13-6 were added during the year to the Permanent Endowment Fund.

The Home appeals to the public for generous help in developing its Industrial Section and strengthening the Permanent Endowment Fund. Contributions may be sent to Secy., Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras.









Swami Saradananda.



# Prabuddha Bharata



उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य परान्विधीयत ।

*Katha Upa. I. 46. 14.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## MAHASAMADHI

It is with a heart overwhelmed with grief that we have to announce that Swami Saradananda, the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission entered into Mahasamadhi on the 19th August at 2-34 A.M. The melancholy event took place at the Ashrama at 1, Mukherjee Lane, Calcutta, where he was on the 6th ultimo attacked with apoplexy which ultimately ended fatally.

Swami Saradananda was one of those direct disciples, who at the sacred call of Sri Ramakrishna gave up the world and devoted their whole life to fulfil and spread the message of their Master. He came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna in the year 1882, and was one of the organisers of the Ramakrishna Mission, having been throughout its secretary from the very beginning.

The early life spent in severe austerities, later in obedience to the desire of Swami Vivekananda he applied himself to work and showed how the teachings of the Gita can be practicalised in the modern age. For whoever came in contact with the Swami, could find in him a living example of **स्थितप्रज्ञः** (one



steady in wisdom). Calm and quiet, 'resting in the Self,' though belonging ever to a higher plane of existence he could bestow his best thoughts on solving the minutest problems of the Mission unruffled and undisturbed and never has anyone seen his tranquility lost. Whoever observed this aspect of his character, would be forced to feel that behind the surface of the life he outwardly lived, there was a deeper life whose depth the whole world could not fathom.

To the public Swami Saradananda was known only as an organiser of social service and philanthropic activities. But to many, the spring from which his actions flowed was unknown. Newspaper readers did hardly know that hundreds of persons would look to him for the solace of their life—mundane and spiritual, and many a wearied soul would find rest under his feet who now feel like orphans at his passing away. To many he had been the life and soul, and his passing away has been much more than death to themselves.

May He who has made us heavy laden and forlorn change our deep woes into great courage and strength so that we may go forward in life with a firm determination to incorporate at least a particle of the ideal, the great Swami lived.

Om Shantih !

Om Shantih !!

Om Shantih !!!

## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE

I had the privilege of seeing the Holy Mother for the first time in 1907. During the rainy season of the next year I went to visit her for the second time. I reached Jayrambati\* where she was living at that time, at 10-30 in the morning. After I had made by devoted obeisance at her feet, she asked me : "Are you a pupil of M. ?"

"No, Mother," I replied, "but I often go to him."

"Is he well? Did you meet him lately?"

\* Mother's native village in the Bankura district of Bengal.



"Yes, he is well. I saw him some eight days back."

When I was taking my night meal, Mother enquired if I was staying at home. "Yes, Mother, I am," I said in reply. "I had recently passed through a catastrophe,—I had been seriously ill. And then came marriage."

Mother.—Are you married already?

Myself.—Yes, Mother.

Mother.—How old is the bride?

Myself.—About thirteen years.

Mother.—Whatever has been is for your good. It is no use worrying now.

Myself.—M. had forbidden me to marry.

Mother.—Ah! has he not himself suffered much in the householder's life!—that is why he dissuaded you.

Myself.—The householder's life is full of troubles. One loses one's manhood in that life.

Mother.—Quite true. It is full of the clamours for money.

Myself.—And also of suffering.

Mother.—But the Master has also his householder devotees. Do not be cast down.

I remained silent.

Mother.—My brothers also are married.

Myself.—Did you permit them to marry?

Mother.—What else could I do? The Master used to say that worms that live and thrive in dirt will die if they are kept in a rice pot. . . . And the nieces now-a-days do not serve their uncles as carefully as we did in our days.

Myself.—Everything is changing by and by.

Mother.—For instance, formerly I could not kill even an ant; but now I sometimes give a blow even to a cat . . . . . The Master said, "Do this and also that." He would say, "'Thou,' 'Thou,' After long and great suffering, man learns to say, 'Thou,' 'Thou'."\*

Do not fear. What if you are married? She also will prove spiritual through the Master's will. May be she acquired merits in her former birth. The Master used to say, "Avidyâ

\* i.e., man learns complete self-surrender to God.



is more powerful than Vidyā." That is to say, Avidya has infatuated the whole world.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the morning of the 20th April, 1919, at about 10 o'clock, Manindra, Satu and Narayana (the last a gentleman from Madras) went to salute the Mother at the Jagadamba Ashrama at Koalpara in the Bankura district, (Bengal), where she had been staying for the last one month. There are two Ashramas at Koalpara, one for men and another for ladies. Mother was staying at the latter.

Mother's grandson,—son of her niece, Maku,—was seriously ill of Diphtheria at Jayrambati, some five miles off from Koalpara. Baikuntha Maharaj was treating him. Mother was very anxious for the child.

After they had made their obeisance, the talk began on her ailing grandson.

Narayana said: "Mother, he will come round through your blessings."

Mother replied with folded palms: "Through the Master's blessings."

Satu.—He (Narayana) has done much for Maku's son.

Mother.—Yes, he is a good man. He sent for medicine from Calcutta and spent money. Who would have done so much if he had not been here?

Narayana.—I am but an instrument of the Master. He is making me act like a tool in his hands.

Mother.—The Master said: "Those who have, measure out; those who have not, take his name."\*

Narayana.—Is it necessary to do the washing ceremony at the time of *Japa*?

Mother.—Yes; if you are in your house, you must do *āsana* and *āchamana*.\* But when you travel, it is enough if you simply repeat his name.

Narayana.—Only his *name*? Not the *mantram*?

Mother.—Yes, also the *mantram*, of course. But then a single utterance of the Lord's name is as effective as a million

\* That is, those who are rich should make charities, etc.

\* *Asana*=seating oneself. *Achamana*=washing mouth and other limbs. These are preliminaries of ritualistic worship, consisting of some symbolical practices indicating firm sitting and steadiness and physical purification.



repetitions of it, if you do it with a steady, concentrated mind. What is the use of repeating million times with an absent mind? You must do this whole-heartedly. Then only you can deserve his grace.

Narayana.—Is what I am doing enough? Or do I need to do anything more?

Mother.—Go on with what you are doing. You are blessed already.

Narayana.—It is said that the Lord grants man his vision if he calls on him sincerely even for two or three days. I have been calling on him for so many days. Why do I not see him?

Mother.—Yes, you will see him. The words of Siva and of the Master cannot be in vain. The Master said to Surendra: "Those who have money, give it away. Those who have not, take his name." If you cannot do even this, then surrender yourself to him. It is enough if you only remember that you have some one—(God)—who is your father or mother, to look after you.

Narayana.—I fully believe it since you say so.

The devotees saluted the Mother again. Narayana laid his head on her feet and Mother blessed him by laying her hand on his head.

(To be continued)

## THE FUTURE OF INDIAN WOMEN

BY THE EDITOR

The mother's heart, the hero's will,  
The sweetness of the southern breeze,  
The sacred charm and strength that dwell  
On Aryan altars, flaming, free,—  
All these be yours, and many more,  
No ancient soul could dream before.....

Swami Vivekananda

Is it true that feminine psychology and abilities are essentially different from masculine? There are those both in the East and in the West who believe them to be so and insist



therefore also on a difference of duties. Hindu thought seems to partially concur with this view. Western feminism however has sought to annul this view-point by a practical demonstration of the equality of the sexes in all fields of life ; and it must be admitted that its efforts have been considerably successful. *Equality* however is not yet proved. The Western opinion is yet divided on the point. And the crucial question has been asked : "Has woman profited by what equality she has achieved? Is she happier than before?" An Italian lady writing in *Current History* (New York) says : "Yes, woman has to-day the vote, glory, power, independence, often has wealth, freedom to do what she pleases ; but she does not have love and affection, none to think of her and of whom she can think ; she is alone, alone and desolate . . . ." The writer believes that the essential quest of a woman's life is to love and be loved, and love is based on altruism and unselfishness and "is related to sentiment, not to intellect." She therefore thinks that feminism which is pre-eminently intellectual in outlook cannot bring happiness and contentment to woman. The writer's opinion is certainly worthy of respect, because she holds an honourable position as an author and one of her books, *The Soul of Woman*, recently excited sensational interest in Europe.

Yet, feminism has accomplished much that is useful. The old limitations that so tightly gripped the soul of woman have been relaxed ; and women are happier and more capable than before through this movement. It is ridiculous to believe that Western women would ever like to go back to their old domestic and social position.

In India also the necessity of a similar readjustment is being keenly felt. But our problem is fortunately easier and clearer than the Western. A superficial view of our womankind may belie this happy estimation. But it is nevertheless a fact. It is true that our women have lived during the last several centuries within purely domestic grooves, though exceptions showing wonderful intellectual and practical capacities have not been rare. But with characteristic high idealism India has always granted her absolute freedom in the domain of religion. There women stand on the same level with men. A woman can, like any man, renounce the world



and take to the life of renunciation and enjoy the freedom that it implies. This fact is extremely significant. For it is the recognition that men and women are ultimately only spiritual beings and that their fulfilment lies in the realisation of their spiritual nature. That means that the differences of sex, psychology or capacity are relative and inessential, that to love and to be loved, as the aforesaid writer maintains, is not the ultimate aim of a woman's life, but to regain her spiritual being, and that the apparent differences of life and outlook between men and women (which are natural and cannot be ignored) should be utilised by making them the pathways to spiritual self-realisation. It is this fact, proved by the experience of millenniums of Hindu history that makes our task of social and domestic readjustment regarding women easier and clearer. We may boldly go forward and welcome any reform and innovation provided the new steps are towards the recognised spiritual ideal of India.

But ideas in order to actualise themselves have always to *fight* their way on. Dust and clamour fill the sky and mistrust and confusion the mind of men. It is no wonder that women's movements in India have not a smooth passage. We are not in a position to speak of other provinces, but Bengal is discussing the social and domestic values with some heat. The Bengali periodical literature is full of the conflict of the old and the new. Women themselves are discussing their present position and claiming new rights. But the public mind does not seem to have truly envisaged the coming changes. There is too much distrust of the new conditions in the minds of our men and much confusion of thought. It is absolutely necessary in order to avoid future complications and impediments to progress that we should know the trend of things and wait with friendly minds to welcome the future. It may be helpful therefore if we dwell on the general outline of the problem and try to find an angle of vision from which the changing features of our domestic and social life may be seen to harmonise with our eternal ideals.

To our mind, all the different problems of Indian women are reducible to two fundamental problems: (1) What should be her attitude towards physical and intellectual life? That is



to say, should these be circumscribed within the domestic limits as at present or should she come out of this limited sphere and take her place alongside of man in all departments of life, social, cultural, economic and political? (2) What will be her attitude towards marriage? Must all women marry? And those who would marry, what would be the significance of their marriage vow? Does it require changes from its present one-sidedness and inexorability? What is the ultimate value of *Sati-dharma*? Is the wife's to be an unquestioning service and allegiance to the husband, without the expectation of any return? Or would it be mere co-partnership, involving mutual rights and duties, such as married life in the West is tending to be? These are the two fundamental questions. All other problems are but details.

Reformers often forget that the success of their altruistic ventures does not depend always on their enthusiasm, however pure their motive and correct their proposition may be. Human life is too intractable a material to yield easily to extraneous cajoling. Like other facts of nature, human life and character also have their laws of being and movement. Just as we have to recognise and bow to its inexorable laws in our treatment with the inanimate nature, even so in our dealings with human beings we have to take into account his raw nature and its ways. Of course man differs from other creatures in not yielding passively to nature but seeking to transmute it into an ideal form. This new element, idealism, is the peculiar distinct of man. All the same, the realities of life, as distinguished from the ideal element, are too powerful to be safely ignored. By realities and nature we mean those original tendencies and desires which pertain directly to our physical and biological existence and which we mould and control in order to realise an ideal life. But sudden bends are not possible in nature. Too much restraint proves dangerous in the long run. Man loses the buoyancy of life and becomes dull and dead. This is the danger of excessive idealism. Man either succumbs to death or flares up in sudden revolt. A reformer therefore has to take into careful consideration the facts of human nature and must not coerce them into his ideal form. Time is an important factor in reform and progress.



Besides, the basic facts of life are not an unchanging quantity. The raw materials that constitute human nature are being constantly replenished with the passing and changing of times. New ideas, aspirations and powers are coming unconsciously into our life from some unknown deeps. They originate from a source of which our conscious life-activity is but the surface and an efflorescence. Man has no hold on this primal origin. When the changes come we can only accept them as inevitable. Therefore the dogged obstinacy of the ultra-conservative is also as futile as the overzealous activity of the reformers. Both are perhaps as foolish as if two parties were to argue whether they should or should not have winter after autumn. Just as the changes of the year's seasons do not depend on anybody's likes or dislikes, in the same way the changes of human society are independent of the zeal of the reformers and the obstinacy of the orthodox. Wisdom lies in recognising the inevitable and calmly welcoming it. Therefore we must prepare for the changes that are coming surely and steadily on in the outlook of our women. It is no use crying them down.

Are there signs of any such *inevitable* changes coming over our womankind? It requires no prophetic vision to answer in the affirmative. The signs are quite apparent. Our women will no longer remain shut up within the narrow precincts of the purely domestic life. The wider life is calling them, and for good or for evil, they must respond to it. For one thing, reason is against the old system. Woman is also a human being. She also is, like man, endowed with intellectual powers and practical capacities. It is natural therefore that these faculties should require use and exercise, and the domestic life does not offer sufficient scope for them. Reason dictates that freedom is the birthright of every being. Woman cannot be defrauded of it even for a pious end. Secondly, the present economic condition of our people is making it increasingly necessary that even our women should become earning members of the family. This new economic factor cannot but induce vital changes in the life of women. Thirdly, so long as the ways of Western social life were unknown, the galling sense of limitation did not irritate our womankind. Contrast makes us happy or unhappy. And a comparison of Western and



Eastern women was inevitable. Our women cannot easily dismiss the Western view-point and the value of the solid improvements that Western feminism has brought about. There can be no doubt that they need to be improved a great deal and secure the many physical and intellectual advantages that Western women enjoy. It is clear therefore what should be the answer to our first question. There must be an increasing participation by our women in the social, intellectual, economic and political life of the country. It is best we be prepared for this. It is not that we are to force these changes on them. On the other hand let us hope that the new developments would be indirect, silent and organic, for sudden changes always miss their purpose and create unnecessary heat. But when the changes do come, may we readily accede to and facilitate them.

What is wanted in this connection is that we should change our idea of female education. The highest function of education is the purification of motives and emotions. To feel truly and correctly is the highest product of culture. The culture of emotions and their control and refinement is therefore the primary object of education. One that feels truly also acts truly and all knowledge must justify itself ultimately in correct action. We know that mere knowledge is not the direct spring of action. It is feeling. But feeling is only half of man, however essential. The practical life which being atrophied brings about ultimately also emotional downfall, requires that we should also learn to use our mind and limbs effectively. The mind must be cultured and so also the senses. The education of our women has hitherto lain mainly in emotional training. Emotional education by its very nature can but be indirect. Through unselfish and patient service, sweet lovingness, and especially through following the glorious traditions of our exalted wifehood and motherhood, this education has continued even up to this day with unabated vigour. This has up till now saved our woman-kind and ourselves. The nation's entire energy seems to have been devoted to the maintenance of our women's noble traditions unimpaired through ages. And surely India can be proud of having produced some of the finest flowers of womanhood. But as we have seen, this was yet a partial education. It generally lacked the intellectual and practical aspects. These must now be added. The changing times require it.



Here the question may be naturally asked : "Will not the intellectual and practical tendency of life take away from the emotional richness and refinement of our women? Will not this be more a loss than a gain?" The answer that promptly rises to our lips is : "Whether it be a gain or loss, it must come about. The fiat has gone forth. We can but bow to it." But of course we need not be so pessimistic. The apprehension is groundless. It may be that the future women will be rich in different emotions than at present. The outstanding characteristic of our women is their ideal wifehood. The ideal of Sati-dharma is the very core of their being. To them their husbands are God himself, and all the adoration of their rich heart they lay at the feet of this God. It may be that the changes that are coming on may take away somewhat from the charms of this ideal. Husbands will probably miss this worshipful attitude of their wives. But would that be necessarily a loss?

What is Sati-dharma? It is one aspect of the Hindu ideal of the spiritualisation and deification of every being. The ultimate object of Sati-dharma is purely spiritual. The wife seeks constantly to look upon and realise her husband as the Divine himself. Her daily ministrations to her husband and his family are sacramental to her. Her life is a continued act of worship. That is why when the husband dies, she does not set up his picture on the altar of worship. The worship of the eternal God which while the husband was living was being done through him, becomes now direct and immediate. She gives herself to purely spiritual life, to contemplation, meditation and worship of her chosen Divine Ideal. She does not feel any break between the life of the wife and of the widow. Sati-dharma is thus only *one* of the ways of spiritual self-realisation. It is only a *means* to a higher end and need not therefore be binding on all. Other women may justly take to other means of Self-realisation. Besides it must not be forgotten that the awakening of the intellectual life and the realism of practical life will not be without their bearing on the emotional ideal of Sati-dharma. Sati-dharma is an essentially emotional practice, a training of the heart. The Sati does not question the worth of her husband. He may be to other eyes a worthless man. But the Sati overcomes the apparent by seeing the



deeper truth, the Self, the God that is in him, who is ever pure, infinite, eternal and almighty. Before this dazzling vision, the consciousness of his apparent limitations dies away. It may be that this vision is not real to all Hindu wives. But the attempt to realise it is always there. The nature of the intellect however is to militate against the ways of the heart. It raises questions. It drags the heart's inmost longings into the wider relationships of outer things. It seeks to systematise the inner and outer worlds into a united whole. The heart wants to forget the external in the absorption of a single love-emotion. When our women will become intellectual, this conflict must tell on the emotionalism of Sati-dharma and impair it to a certain extent. Husbands will no longer be Gods. Their drawbacks will come in for keener remarks and more drastic treatment. They will be made to fit in with the intellectual ideals of their wives. The same results will also follow from cultivating practical aptitudes.

But let us confess here that our forecast may not after all be correct. It is also quite possible that in spite of all intellectualism and practicality, women will remain as intensely emotional and adoring as ever. The present tendencies of Western feminism indicate that. It is an apt remark which says that a woman always wants a home and a family, a field to satisfy the hunger of her heart. Ellen Key notes two ideals, two directions of the woman movement, the second of which she approves: "The older programme reads, 'Full equality with man.' In the 'state of the future' both sexes shall have the same duty of work and the same protection of work, while the children are reared in state institutions. The movement in the other direction purposes to win back the wife to the husband, the mother to the children, and, thereby, the home to all."

From what has been said of Sati-dharma it must not be concluded that in its purely emotional form it has no moral effect on husbands. Nothing so tells on man as the adoration of a sincere loving soul. One almost becomes what one's beloved thinks and wishes oneself to be. This is the alchemy of love. Hindu husbands bear innumerable testimony to the efficacy of Sati-dharma. We are led to make these remarks in view of certain perverted views we have seen publicly dis-



cussed, sometimes by women themselves. They seem to look upon Sati-dharma as a sort of slavery imposed on women by Hindu orthodoxy. The abuses of an ideal must not be made the standard by which to judge it. It is true there are wife-beating husbands, and that wives often bear patiently the torments of their husband, in steadfast faith to their ideal. But taken all together, this ideal has not been productive of less good than any other conjugal ideal of the world. If the ultimate effect is beneficial, what is the harm of being a little patient? The wife may, with all honour to herself, stoop to conquer. Surely one party must bear, if conjugal life is to be happy and successful. We cannot, again, too strongly deprecate the mentality that decries Sati-dharma in order to have it replaced by a debasing and debilitating frivolous life. We have no right to destroy unless we also build at least to the same measure. India's one safeguard is that its faith in the ultimate end of existence is unalienable, born as it is of direct knowledge and experience. All social changes therefore pertain only to *means*. These changes are easily judged by their capacity to lead to the realisation of the eternal spiritual goal. Are the critics of Sati-dharma finding other effective ways of spiritual self-realisation for our women? Then they are on the right path. Or do they seek to escape the rigours of this noble ideal in order to waste themselves away in temporal passions? Then they are condemned. For Indian women as well as men, there cannot be any rose-strewn path. Whatever path is chosen, old or new, the journey must always be uphill. The ideal must never be lowered. Only new paths to the summit may be discovered.

The answer to the second question is therefore apparent. There will be changes in the marriage ideal. Sati-dharma will remain. But the married life may also be conceived as only faithful companionship, the spiritual idealism of the wife having shifted its centre of gravity to other spheres of life. Consequently also there will be many who will find in the celibate life a fitter instrument for the attainment of their life's ideal. For this is an excellent path to Self-realisation, giving as it does greater opportunities for concentration of powers.

We have presented this outline of forecasts from the evidences of the changing circumstances. We do not find any-



thing to be afraid of in them. Of course these will mean a profound change in the outlook of our women. But the change will certainly be for the better. We have mentioned before that the great changes in society come from the depths of the world's soul. They are not under any man's control. But man's duty, though from one view-point is only silent submission to them, is also from another view-point a strenuous struggle for readjustment. Human progress is a continuous struggle between the real and the ideal. Man constantly struggles to bring the real under the control of his ideal. The motive power of the struggle is not wholly derived from the consciousness of the ideal, but also from an innate desire to maintain the continuity of social and cultural traditions. Society is lost when traditions die away. It is through the channel of living traditions undergoing needed modifications with the change of circumstances that humanity seems to draw the sap of life from the inner depths of reality.

The present opposition to and distrust of the oncoming changes in the status of women are really due to a failure to find out the link between the old and the coming new. The Hindu is apparently afraid of novelties. But the moment they are shown to be a corollary of his ancient principles, he welcomes them gladly and confidently, however radical in character they may be. The student of Hindu sociology may have noted what important part some Sanskrit verses play in Hindu reform movements. Iswar Ch. Vidyasagar sought for scriptural sanction before he launched forth his widow-remarriage campaign. All Hindu prophets and reformers have based their new gospel on the old scriptures. The idea was to maintain the continuity of traditions. And we believe that it is not difficult to show that the new ideals of our women are but implications of our ancient principles. We hold that *the present women movements are only a return from the Pauranika ideals of life to the Vedic ideals.*

Our social and spiritual life have hitherto been in the tight grip of the Pauranika ideals. In every department of life, not merely in relation to women, we are trying to revert to the Vedic ideals. We do not mean to say that the Pauranika ideals are wrong and that our life, national and individual, for the last several centuries, have been a waste and a blunder. What



we mean is that we were sidetracked by them, from the main line of progress. But it has not been necessarily a loss. We have been as a consequence much enriched by spiritual experience and accession of various cultural and racial elements to the Mother Church. It was also necessary and inevitable. When the extreme liberalism of Buddha's teachings opened the gate wide for all and sundry to come into the fold of Hinduism, it was necessary that the newly admitted creeds, mostly crude, should be given free scope to grow and assimilate the fundamentals of the Hindu religion and culture. This necessitated the emphasising of personal ideals in religion. This is the origin of the Puranas. The Vedic ideal emphasises the impersonal and basic truths of spiritual life. The Pauranika ideal introduces variations. The one is direct in the process it proposes for Self-realisation. The other proposes many indirect and perhaps easier processes. The Vedas enunciate the true nature of the Self and asks one to realise it directly, by shedding all false knowledge and desires. The Puranas concede that it is not always easy for the common mind to respond to this strong call, nor are all temperaments suited to the high impersonal ideal. It therefore proposes to yield to the demands of the common mind for the sweets of life, and by asking it to spiritualise them, gradually raises it along a wider curve to the transcendental ideal. This call for the spiritualisation of the common experiences and desires of life is peculiar to the Puranas. Of course the Vedic statement that all is Brahman warrants and furnishes the basis for such spiritualisation. Sati-dharma is one of the various ways of spiritualisation. The husband is sought hereby to be spiritualised. The indirect processes of the Puranas have thus brought the practice of spirituality, and not merely rituals, nearer to the masses. But the one great drawback of the Pauranika religion is that it has almost made us forget that this indirectness in spiritual practice is not necessary for those who can take directly to the Truth, and that the personal ideals and whatever pertain to them are not absolute but are justified to the extent they conduce to the realisation of the impersonal Vedic ideal. We have been led to confuse the means for the end. And hence all these narrownesses and weaknesses in



our social and religious life and the lack of that breadth and power of vision which is characteristic of the Upanishads.

The call has now come and the changing circumstances of the world need that we go back to the impersonal strength-giving ideas and ideals of the Vedas. The intermediate experiences and acquisitions of the Pauranika age have enriched us greatly and disclosed deeper meaning in the Vedic teachings. In the Vedic ideal alone we shall find the requisite strength for and the rationale of our present and future development. Thus our women also shall again go to the Vedic ideal. The Vedic ideal declares that everyone, man or woman, is pure spirit, beyond all qualifications of body and mind, sexless, impersonal. The soul of woman has felt the inspiration of this impersonal ideal. Women too must realise themselves as spirit. They also must learn to feel themselves as pure self, untrammelled by the consciousness of sex, and act and live in the glory and dignity of the Self. The Pauranika Sati-dharma is only *one* of the processes of realising that Self. But it does not matter which ways we take to, provided we get rid of the delusion that makes us think ourselves as body and mind. The Vedas declare that the constant remembrance and thinking of oneself as pure spirit makes one overcome delusion and know the Truth. So, not only shall women have, on the authority of the Vedas, the free choice of means for Self-realisation, but shall also feel every moment the dignity of spiritual selfhood that confers unwonted purity, strength and sweetness on the human mind. No man or woman whatever the life he or she chooses, be it domestic or public, can, being inspired by this ideal, ever feel or act in any undignified way. Life will be for women as for men fuller and nobler. Let us therefore confidently and fearlessly acclaim the future, crowned as it is with the light of the Vedic ideals.

## GOD, SOUL AND MATTER

BY SWAMI SHARVANANDA

From very early days of history, human mind has been trying to unravel the mysteries of these three fundamental principles,—God, soul and matter. In fact man's very progress depended upon the discovery of their truths from behind the



veil that hides the face of Reality. Investigation has been carried on along different lines, and the results achieved have been highly beneficial to mankind. Religion was and is busy knowing the true nature of God. Philosophy with its branches of psychology and ontology has been trying to know the true nature of the soul. And science is still busily investigating into the constitution of matter.

The relations between these lines of investigation are sometimes misunderstood. We often think that the truths of religion and philosophy, *i.e.*, those relating to God and soul have no relation to the truths that science tries to find out. But this estimation is not true. The present is an age of synthesis. Modern science and the different branches of human knowledge, probing deep into the mysteries of nature and life, are slowly discovering a common unity amidst their apparent varieties. It has thus become easy for us to synthesise the truths of religion, the truths of philosophy and the truths of science.

Nor is it correct to think that religion or God is a mere matter of faith and cannot be proved on rational grounds. The popular mind assumes the existence of an insurmountable barrier between religion and science. But the advanced knowledge of man does not think so any more. Every knowledge is now being subjected to the strict scrutiny of reason. Mere faith often biases inference and colours judgment. We shall here try to study the fundamental principles of God, soul and matter from a purely rational view-point.

## MATTER

We shall first take up matter. It is best and easiest to start with the gross, and of the three aforesaid principles, matter is assuredly the grossest, being concrete and tangible. Let us take the instance of a table. We perceive the table so clearly and find it so gross and concrete and so very real that were we to declare that it does not exist and is a fiction of our brain, all would laugh at us and think us as fit objects for a lunatic asylum. But such in fact it is. For what is a table really? According to modern science it is only a vision imposed upon a group of carbon compound molecules. These molecules are revolving round each other like the planets of the solar system. The molecules are made up of tiny atoms of certain elements such as oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, etc., and these atoms themselves are made up of very fine particles of energy called electrons and protons. A proton is the centre round which a number of electrons revolve in order to constitute an atom. Some scientists go further and say that electrons are so many vortices of one imponderable substance called ether.



Such is the analysis of matter according to modern science and so far as it goes it is no doubt good and correct. But when we seek to rationalise these scientific conclusions, we are faced with great difficulties ; we find ourselves involved in contradictions and absurdities. A time was when matter and energy were considered different entities, and matter itself was thought to be composed of mutually independent elements. These old theories are now no longer respected. It is now accepted that matter and energy are essentially one. What we call matter, or atoms or molecules, are but different forms of the same energy. And matter is fundamentally one. But even this advanced view does not help us out of philosophical difficulties.

Let us take for instance the atomic theory of matter, that matter is made up of fine atoms or electrons ; that is to say, the corpuscular theory of matter, that matter is constituted of corpuscles which are elemental in their nature. These corpuscles cannot be broken into finer particles ; they are the smallest indivisible particles. If we break a table and reduce it to the subtlest particles conceivable, then those subtle particles would be the finest state of matter. Those corpuscles, or atoms or electrons or whatever we may call them, are therefore devoid of magnitude or length, breadth and thickness, for, any substance having magnitude ought to be divisible. To say that they are irreducible is to maintain that they have no length, breadth and thickness, that they have no magnitude. That means that they have no existence in space. Anything that exists in space must have magnitude and must be reducible to finer forms. To hold that the ultimate state of matter is irreducible is to make it at once transcendental like a geometrical point which has existence but no magnitude,—which is unthinkable. This is the first difficulty of the scientific theory of matter. The second difficulty is that a combination of such matter particles cannot by any means produce dimensions, the phenomena of length, breadth and thickness. If matter in the ultimate state, *i.e.*, as corpuscles, is devoid of dimensions, then a group of corpuscles cannot produce dimensions. Zero multiplied infinitely is zero still. The phenomenon of dimension or space is inexplicable according to this theory of matter.

If we take the other, the homogeneous theory, that the ultimate state of matter is homogeneous, *i.e.*, without any corpuscle and immobile like ether, then it becomes impossible to explain motion in matter, and the phenomena of heat, light, electricity or magnetism remain unexplained. Suppose that the capacity of a room is 320 cubic feet. If we pack that room with 80 boxes 4 cubic feet each, the whole space will be filled, there would not remain any space between the boxes and they would not move even so slightly. For the boxes to move even by an inch, there must be some gap between them. Similarly,



in the case of the homogeneous condition of matter, as there is no inter-corpuseular space, no motion is possible. Hence motion cannot be explained by the homogeneous theory of matter. So from every standpoint we find that the scientific theory of matter leads us to insurmountable difficulties.

And these are not all. The greatest puzzle is how matter such as science defines it, produces the variegated vision of the universe. We see the wonderful effect that matter is producing upon us. We perceive the table so tangibly, yet it is not real. If we were endowed with superhuman vision so as to be able to see the subtle constituents of the table, or if human ingenuity could devise a microscope powerful enough to reveal the molecular, atomic or electronic composition of the table, then we would have found that the table-vision is a chimera and that only a number of molecules are revolving and breaking into atoms and the atoms are revolving and breaking into electrons, and there are electrons and nothing else. If we come to realise this state of electronic existence, we shall find that the universe is one infinite sea of electrons or matter and its infinite varieties are nowhere. Science does not explain how and why we perceive these varieties, if as a matter of fact there are only shapeless electrons. For an explanation of this mystery, we shall have to go to psychology. Psychology will tell us that the varieties of the universe are due to our mind and defective senses. The table is an aberration. Why do we see the table? First because our eyes have not the capacity to see the molecules, atoms or electrons ; and secondly because our mind misinterprets or misreads the reality. It is well-known that the human eye has only a limited power of receiving the light rays. It can receive only the seven rays of the spectrum. Below the red rays, *i.e.*, the heat rays it cannot see, nor above the violet rays or actinic rays, though there is light both above the violet rays and below the red rays. All the senses are thus limited in their capacity. Our senses are able to respond only to certain vibrations of the original matter. They fail us beyond that limited range. Our senses cannot and do not perceive matter as it in itself is. But it nevertheless affects them and the mind, and we, according to our tendency and capacity of response, interpret it as our external world. The world is therefore partly external and partly internal. It is both subjective and objective. And here is the contribution of the mind to the constitution of the visible universe.

We have already alluded to the vision that will present itself to our eyes if they are endowed with superhuman powers ;—there certainly would not be any dimensions or the opacity and solidity of our present vision of things. These apparent attributes of objects are clearly then contributed by



our mind.\* Not merely the dimensions of things, but even their position in space and time is affected by our mind. Our mind interprets even time and space according to its varying moods. When we are very cheerful, a day seems to fly away like an hour. When we are morose, time hangs heavy on our hands and an hour appears as long as a day. As this is true of time, so is it of space. When, for instance, we travel in mountains, even distant things appear as quite near. The reason is that the mountain air is so clear that our standard of the measurement of space formed in the plains where the atmosphere is thick with dust and dirt, deludes and fails us. This is how time and space are affected by our mind. We do not mean that time, space and causation are wholly subjective as some Western philosophers seem to maintain. They have some objective existence also. But we wholly discredit the idea of the modern realists that they are entirely objective. They are, as we have mentioned before, subjective-objective.

We thus find that psychology and logic in trying to supplement and perfect the scientific theory of matter, have led us gradually to a point where matter blends into mind. There is no escape from this conclusion. Our ancient thinkers also held the identical view. We find that the Sankhya school looks upon the mind to be fundamentally the same as the external gross matter. The opinions of this school are replete with suggestions that help us to overcome the difficulties that beset the conclusions of science regarding the ultimate nature of matter. If we take mind along with matter and look upon them as essentially one, we at once find the connecting link that relates the formless original matter to the finished forms of the variegated world, which as our analysis has shown, are contributed by the mind. We have seen before how science reduces matter to an extra-material form when it holds that atoms have no magnitude and are really vortices of energy. From there the mind is not very far off. Such matter stands on the border-land of the mind. Space will not permit us to dwell here on the explanation of how mind becomes what we call material objects. The Sankhya and Vedanta philosophies dwell on it elaborately. We shall content ourselves by pointing out certain circumstantial evidences which corroborate the idea that matter and mind are fundamentally one and are essentially related.

For instances, the phenomena of thought-reading and mental telepathy and the experience of occultists who can stop the swinging pendulum of a clock by merely fixing their gaze on it. These phenomena are common in India and are generally looked upon as superhuman and supernatural. But

\* That is to say, not as the individual mind but as a part of the cosmic mind.



Indian thinkers hold that there is nothing supernatural about them, they are perfectly natural. What is required is that our definition of matter should be revised and made more inclusive. Fifty years ago wireless telegraphy and telephony would have been considered supernatural, but to-day they appear perfectly natural. As an electric wave sent by the wireless apparatus from one corner of the world is received through the medium of ether in another corner, so in the case of mental telepathy and thought-reading, one brain becomes the receiving station and another the transmitting station for the sending and receiving of a thought-wave. A thought-wave is as much material as an etheric wave or electric wave, only it is finer, much finer than even the finest conception of matter. The phenomenon of stopping a pendulum by means of the fixed gaze shows that mind can work upon gross matter, that is to say, the mind is sending out an energy that can work upon matter. If mind and matter were not kindred substances, the one could not act upon the other.

As regards mental healing, cure by auto-suggestion is an accomplished fact. It has been clearly proved that physical ailments can be cured by bringing mental forces to bear on the body. Therefore there must be an intimate relation between mind and matter. Unless mind were one with matter, it could never work upon matter.

The Indian definition is that anything that changes, has motion and works in time, space and causation, is matter. Mind changes, has different conditions and works through time, space and causation. Modern science is sure to arrive in course of its progress at a stage where it will recognise that matter and mind are one and that thought is as much an energy as heat, light or electricity,—of course not in the sense of the so-called materialists who look upon the mind as an epiphenomenon of gross matter, but in the sense that matter in its original form is far subtler than even electrons and that in its primal condition it branches out of the cosmic mind.

## SOUL

Let us next try to understand the nature of soul from psychological and ontological view-points. We naively feel that our personality is essentially dependent on the physical body. We call ourselves Mr. or Mrs. so and so, according to the sex of our physical organism and we identify ourselves with other adjuncts of our physical existence. But a little thought is enough to prove that this assumption is wrong. Human personality does not consist in the physical body. There is something subtler and higher in man—an intelligent principle. Even modern biology has come to recognise this fact. Modern biologists, even when they do not believe in the unity of soul



and in the singular nature of the individual, are constrained to grant the existence of a superior principle in man, flowing parallel to the physical energy. They call it the biotic energy. The physical energy forms the outer garments as it were, while the biotic energy is the inner essence. The most modern theory of biology regarding individual life is what is called the colony of consciousness theory, that every cell of the physical body has a life of its own and our individuality is the sum total of the lives of the constituting cells. Biologists adduce the illustration of a bundle of burning candles. If we take a hundred lighted candles and bind them together, the separate flames will mingle with each other to produce a large flame. The small flames will lose their separate existence and only one single light will be noticed. Similarly with the living cells. There is no such thing as an individual life. What appears as such is only the aggregate of cell lives, and the dissolution of these cells, the going out of the tiny flames, means the death of man. This is no doubt a fine theory, but a little scrutiny reveals the unsound character of the idea of colony of consciousness. In the case of candles, it is quite plausible, because a candle is an unconscious thing and has only an objective existence. Objectively considered, the delusion of the combined flames is perfect,—it is really a single flame though made up of smaller lights. But the case of man is different. We have also a subjective existence. We carry within us the consciousness of the singularity of our being. Everyone feels that he is an individual and distinct from everything else, that he is not a compound being, but integral and elemental in his nature. Suppose the candle-flames had consciousness. Then, though to an onlooker their combination would have appeared to constitute a single flame, the candles themselves would have each felt that it had no essential unity with the other flames, was complete in itself and had an absolutely independent existence, and the compound flame itself would have had no self-consciousness of its own beyond the separate, individual consciousnesses of the candles. Similarly, if human consciousness were the aggregate of the consciousnesses of individual cell lives, then each cell would feel that it is separate from the rest and the aggregated consciousness would by no means produce the feeling of singularity, unity and integrity such as every man has within himself. One plus one plus one plus one and so on do not make one. So this biological theory is too inadequate to explain soul-consciousness.

Whence then this consciousness of "I," "My being," etc.? What does the real nature of our being consist in? Is it in the body? No, because body obviously is inert matter. Its seeming activity is due to something beyond it. We infer its existence by the difference between the living and the dead. What is that principle? The existence of a disembodied spirit



is an accepted fact. Even a scientist like Sir Oliver Lodge acknowledges it. In India we have from very ancient times recognised the super-physical existence of man. That existence transcends even the mind. The principle which thinks, feels and wills is not the reality of the soul ; for the self-consciousness of man is much wider and more persistent than even the mind. Through all different stages of life,—childhood, youth and age, and the constant changes of the body and mind, the consciousness of the individuality of man persists. An old man feels that he is the same as once was a boy, though he knows that his body and mind have undergone radical changes. Physiologists will tell us that the old cells of the body are being continually replaced by new cells. The body is a flux, it is ever changing like a river. Just as a river, even though fresh quantities of water are flowing down it every moment, retains its identity, even so the body. The constancy of the river is due to its having a permanent bed on which the water flows. Even so there must be something permanent behind the changing body and mind to ensure the constancy of human individuality. That we have to find out. That is the soul of man.

We are aware that the mind of a boy and the mind of an old man are not the same. The mind changes continually. Even a short observation will show how it fluctuates and varies in its moods. But through all these changes, there is a thread of permanency. We feel, "*I am happy*," "*I am miserable*," "*I am doing*," "*I am thinking*," etc. This "*I*," the consciousness of one singular existence, unchangeable and immutable in nature, forms the permanent background of all the physiological and psychological changes of the human personality.

This fact becomes clearer when we analyse the different states of consciousness. Take for instance the three states of consciousness: the waking state, the dreaming state, and the dreamless deep sleep state. In the waking state we are conscious of the external world and of physical and mental phenomena. In the dreaming state, the consciousness of the physical world is obliterated and a new world rises out of the mind. A beggar dreams that he has become an emperor ;—all his poverty and sufferings are forgotten and he enjoys imperial happiness. These are the freaks of the mind ; it changes and stultifies even our physical existence. But in and through the extreme changes of the dream state, the "*I*" persists. The qualifying attributes of "*I*" vary, but the "*I*" remains the same even in a dream.

The persistence of the "*I*" and its unaffected permanency is still clearly proved by the evidences of the dreamless deep sleep state. In that state, we are considered to become absolutely unconscious. When we fall into a profound sleep, we no doubt become unconscious of the physical world, of time, space and causation and our own body. But strictly speaking, it is



not an absolutely unconscious state, for though the sleeping man is unconscious of everything else, he is not unconscious of his own being. For had he been so, there would have been a gap in the continuity of his existence. An existence without some kind of consciousness of it, is the same as non-existence to us. If self-consciousness were totally absent in deep sleep, then the man who entered into sleep and the man who awoke from it would have felt themselves as separate individuals. The thread of existence would snap everytime a man fell into sound sleep. But such as a matter of fact is not the case. The continuity of existence is not affected the least by the daily sleep of man. This clearly proves that the "I" exists even beyond the functions and existences of the mind and body.

There is a still further proof. When a man wakes up from sleep, he often says, "I slept well. I did not remember anything." Well, though he did not remember anything, he remembers at least that he did not remember anything. So there must be a kind of consciousness even in deep sleep.

Consciousness can be likened to a crystal cup and its contents. When a crystal cup is filled with a liquid, it assumes the colour of the liquid, but when the contents are poured out, the cup regains its original transparency. Our consciousness also is in the same way tinged by its contents the ideas. Our thoughts and feelings form the contents of our consciousness and impart their colour to it. That is why we do not perceive the true nature of consciousness in either the awakened or dreaming state. Only in deep sleep do we get a glimpse of it and are filled with profound calm and joy. When a man enters into deep sleep, all conditions of life fall off from him; he forgets his physical and mental existences and the self alone remains in its original, undifferentiated state. This is the essence of man, this is the soul, the principle of consciousness. The English word, "consciousness," is misleading. Our word for the soul is "Chaitanya". *Chaitanya* is not *consciousness*. Consciousness, according to Western psychology, implies mental activity. The Western conception of soul is quite different from our Atman, because according to Western psychology, the soul is mind. The true soul of man or the Atman, however, is not mind. It is a singular entity quite independent of the mind and its functions. In deep sleep state, the mind does not function, yet man lives. If mind were soul, then man in deep sleep ought to have been soulless. But such is not the case.

This is what the analysis of our ordinary experiences indicate regarding the nature of the soul.

But there are certain experiences recorded by a few individuals at different times in different parts of the world, which point to a new phase of consciousness. We cannot disregard these evidences if we are to come to a scientific estimation of the nature of the soul, for the greatest danger to induction is the



omission of relevant data, however rare they may be. Modern psychology bases its conclusions mostly on the awakened state of consciousness, and errors and imperfections become necessarily inevitable. Indian psychologists however have taken all the different states of consciousness into account,—the waking state, the dreaming state, the deep sleep state and another which they call the "fourth" state. There is a state of consciousness, the superconscious state, in which the ideas of time, space and causation are transcended and forgotten. It differs from the deep sleep state in that whereas we reach the superconscious state by deliberate effort and gain thereby a permanent knowledge and illumination of the Truth and the Real, in the deep sleep state, our attainment of our pristine, unconditioned nature is veiled by cosmic ignorance and we do not therefore remember our experience on awakening and do not derive any permanent illumination from it.

The superconscious experience is not a freak. It can be had by all. Nor is it morbid. Indian psychologists and philosophers have thrown the challenge to the world to test its validity. It is foolish to deny its truth without taking up the challenge and fulfilling the test. Man can transcend all the conditions of his physical and mental existence. The principle of human consciousness *can* realise a state in which it knows the transcendental existence. It is not deep sleep, it is not unconsciousness. It is a state of intense awareness and it has peculiar experiences of its own. These experiences have been recorded in the Vedas and have been testified to by hundreds of ancient Rishis and sages and are being corroborated even to-day by numerous Hindu mystics. These things have been experienced also by the mystics of Persia and Arabia (Sufis), of Greece and Alexandria (Neo-Platonists) and of China (followers of Lao-tze). The superconscious state is not therefore the morbid experience of solitary individuals, but is intensely real and healthy. A tree is known by its fruits.—Had these experiences been really morbid, the persons who realised them would have shown, like lunatics, signs of morbidity. But history records that these persons who soared so high and knew and stood face to face with the Infinity, were the salt of the earth. They wielded gigantic powers for good and noble activities in the human society. Surely a Buddha or a Christ is not a lunatic. Sane psychology therefore cannot deny the truth of the superconscious state of existence. This is the real nature of the soul.\*

(To be continued.)

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\* A lecture delivered at Simla.



## MOMENTS WITH THE SWAMI TURIYANANDA IN AMERICA

BY SWAMI ATULANANDA

Perhaps it is only fair at the outset to remind you that my remarks about the Swami Turiyananda are intended only to give you a picture of the Swami as I see him to-day, through the veil of time. At this late date it is impossible for me to quote him literally, or even to approach his forcible, convincing language.

We shall not now be concerned about details, about dates or places. It is with the Swami himself we shall deal, with the man, the personality. What interests us is to study him, to see him handle situations, to watch him react in contacts with his daily surroundings.

To me there is nothing more elevating and ennobling than to contemplate the life of one whom we love and revere, to whom we look up as our example, in whose footsteps we wish to tread. To me it appears to be one way of associating with the wise, a method advocated by our scriptures as a means to liberation.

Once in America a stray acquaintance in an off-hand way asked me what would seem a very simple question. It was this: "Do you think Swami Turiyananda was a great man?" My answer came without a moment's hesitation, "Yes."

Thus we ask and dispose of questions. But when my acquaintance, who did not seem to agree with me, had left, this question set me thinking.

When I came back to America, after having visited India, people often asked me, "How did you like India?" Of course, the answer meant nothing to them. Asking questions is merely a habit, and any reply satisfies provided it is definite and comes instantaneously. The more cocksure you are, the better people like it. And so we move on through life asking and giving opinions in a shallow, thoughtless manner.

What I think of Swami Turiyananda or of India, matters very little indeed, except to *myself*. The question that really matters is, How far have I personally been able to appreciate the greatness of the Swami and the real worth of India; how have I been affected, how have I profited, what have I gained by coming in contact with a singularly great personality, a man of staunch character, of deep spiritual realization? How



did my nature respond to the remarkable experience of living in India with her complex, ancient civilization, a civilization, if not on the surface always, at least at heart, perhaps, the noblest civilization in the world to-day. What have I been able to assimilate, what have I absorbed, made my own, how was my character affected, my life molded? The serious question is this, "Has it brought me closer to God?"

Was Swami Turiyananda a great man? But what is greatness? What is the standard to judge by? Who is the person to judge? Greatness is recognized only by the great. Many a genius has passed through life without being noticed during his own time.

The generally accepted test of greatness is however the more or less lasting influence for good, a person, or an invention, or a production of art, or whatever it may be, brings to bear upon society. What *lives* is great. Popularity often is of a mushroom growth, famous to-day, to-morrow forgotten. But what is great has a lasting effect, holds a lasting interest. Sri Krishna was great, Buddha was great, Jesus was great, because their work lives to-day to bless humanity. Their popularity during their life-time we can only surmise, but certain it is that their popularity and influence has grown and spread throughout the ages.

Swami Turiyananda was not great in the popular sense, he was not a man of world-renown. His influence was local, confined to smaller circles. But if we apply the same standard to a smaller radius, his influence on individuals instead of on the masses, one would not hesitate one moment to call him a man of rare worth. He himself once said to me, "If I can influence a few students to love the Divine Mother and to live a pure life, I shall consider my work a success."

This hope of his was fulfilled in a far greater measure than he expected. He has influenced the lives of a large number of persons, both here in India and abroad. And in those whom he touched his influence will continue to bear fruit as time goes on.

Swami Turiyananda was a character-builder, his work was solid and enduring. And let us remember that in the light of a glaring sun the stars do not stand out to attract the common eye. But each star in its own orbit fills its place, and when the sun retreats, it adorns the heavens, and helps to illumine the darkness of the night.

We shall not discuss Swami Turiyananda comparing him with greater lights, such as his incomparable Master from whom he drew his inspiration. We take him for what he was, a blazing torch of spirituality, a blessing to those who knew him best.



In America—and it is of his life in America that I shall speak here—he was a constant inspiration to the disciples who lived with him. Personally I have had the blessings of his association for years, a close and intimate association, that gave me the opportunity of watching him and of learning from him day and night. To me, his life was the greatest lesson, for of Swami Turiyananda I can say with conviction that he walked with God. He was devoted to his ideal, the highest, the noblest ideal man can aspire to. His ideal was ever before him, it was his pole-star of which he never lost sight. And surely that in itself is greatness.

His ideal was to live in constant communion with God. God-realization was his very life, his existence, the breath of his nostrils. It formed the background of all his actions, of every word he spoke. His playful moods, his periods of serenity, his eating, his walking, his teaching, were all so many offerings to God. There seemed not to be a moment that the thought of the Divine Mother did not have a place in his mind.

To me this was most astonishing. Whenever I met him he turned the conversation into a religious channel. And it was his constant care to have his students turn their minds to God. "What are you talking about?" he would question, breaking in upon students conversing together. "Forget the world, think of Mother." This occurred so often, that the very sight of him made us remember it.

"If you think of worldly affairs all the time," he said in the Shanti Ashrama, "why did you come here? Live in the world and enjoy the world. We have come here to think of Mother. Lower animals live in the senses only. It is man's privilege to live a spiritual life, to know the Atman. Unless we try to realize our divine nature, we are no better than beasts."

It is now more than twenty years since Swami Turiyananda was in America, but even to-day it is not at all unusual when his students meet that he comes up in their conversations, and the discussions often turn to the wonderful period of his life in the Shanti Ashrama and other places in California. And even to this day many of the letters received from his students in the West contain some reference to the life of the beloved teacher.

On other occasions I have given my own impressions of the Swami. It may be interesting to know what others think of him, how others were blessed by his association. I shall therefore intersperse my remarks with reminiscences given by some of the other students. I shall first of all quote a letter received from California some time ago. This is what my friend writes:



"When we said our final good-bye to our beloved Swami Vivekananda in San Francisco, he told us about Swami Turiyananda, whom he would send to us from New York, and he assured us of the beauty of his character and nature. We were therefore prepared for a wonderful and unusual personality. But we had much to learn, for as we came to know him our love and appreciation grew quite beyond expectation.

"He was so courageous, and seemed like a lion at times ; and again at other times he was quiet and gentle as a lamb.

"He never hesitated to correct our short-comings, and he often teased us, and that so sweetly, that we adored him all the more.

"While in San Francisco he was quite ill, suffering with a severe attack of gall stones, and I helped with the nursing. In this way I came very close to him, and while he scolded me unmercifully, I always felt that beneath it all there was a great love. In fact, we all noticed that after the scolding he was always most gentle and kind to us, so we felt that he loved us the more for having rebuked us.

"In Oakland, he held classes smaller than those in San Francisco. I liked these smaller classes for they were more intimate, and I often travelled the distance from San Francisco to Oakland with him. He always questioned me about why we Westerners did certain things, and often embarrassed me, as I was very young at that time, and so not very apt with my answers. With very keen insight he pointed out weaknesses in my character, which I of course attempted to correct.

"Everything interested the Swami, what we were to have for dinner, how we prepared it. And often he was impatient to taste a new dish before it was ready. While he helped about the cooking, he chanted and told us stories. So we nearly forgot what we were doing, as we did not like to lose one word of his.

"After dinner he lectured and answered questions, and never was he at a loss for an answer even to the most abstruse questions.

"The memory of his sweet presence still remains like a fragrance. Though it has been so many years since he was with us, he will never be forgotten by those who loved him so much.

"The daily happenings were used to point out the lesson he wished to teach, just as Jesus did when he was with his disciples, and as I am sure all great souls must do.

"His conversation repeatedly turned to stories of his boyhood when he was at the feet of his great Master, our Lord Sri Ramakrishna. He made us feel sure that we really were His children, even to the least of us, for he said over and over again, 'Sri Ramakrishna has you by the hand, he will



never let you go.' These words thrilled me through and through ; but I told the Swami there must be some mistake about me. The sweet smile and words with which he reassured me then, will never be forgotten. They were a benediction. And now I still hope and pray that these words are true for all of us who loved the Swami."

This beautiful little sketch I did not want to spoil by taking it to pieces. But perhaps it may be to our mutual benefit if now I enlarge on the subjects hinted at in this letter.

The final good-bye to the Swami Vivekananda of which my friend writes, took place when Swamiji was leaving San Francisco for Eastern parts of the United States. I was not present at the time, but this, I was informed, was what Swamiji told the students: "I have lectured to you on Vedanta," he said, "in Swami Turiyananda you will see Vedanta personified. He lives it every moment of his life. He is the ideal Hindu monk, and he will help you all to live a pure and holy life."

But though the students were thus prepared for a wonderful personality, when at last the Swami came from New York, it took a little time to understand him. He was so different from anyone the students had ever met. But as they came in close contact with him, and came to know him intimately, their love and appreciation grew quite beyond their most sanguine expectations.

I have seen the Swami in many moods, sometimes playful, sometimes serene, at other times indulgent, and on rare occasions severe. His spiritual moods would also change. I have seen him in New York startle a sophisticated Christian audience with the bold, uncompromising message of the Advaita Vedanta, enjoining them to break loose from the bondage of *maya*. "Brahman alone is real," he exclaimed with great force, "everything else is unreal ; and the human soul is that Brahman. The lion shut up in a bulrush cage thinks he is caught, and escape impossible. He does not know that one blow from his mighty paw would demolish the cage and set him free. We are bound by the delusion of ignorance. Tear away the delusion and be free. All power is within you, for you are the Atman. With the sword of knowledge, sever the veil of *maya*, and assert your divine nature."

To some of the most orthodox in the audience these stirring words sounded like blasphemy. A timid young lady, after the lecture, approached the Swami and told him that she could not understand how the soul could be God, and the world unreal. The Swami listened patiently to all she had to say. Then in a very earnest tone he consoled and encouraged her.



"It took me many years to realize this," he said, "but once it is realized the work is done." Then the lady began to speak in praise of Christianity as being so much easier to grasp. "Yes," the Swami admitted "Vedanta is not an easy, comfortable religion. Truth is never cheap. So long as we are satisfied with glass beads we won't search for diamonds. It is hard work to delve into the earth, remove the stones and rocks, and go to great depths to find the precious stone. Vedanta is the jewel among religions."

At other times he would take up the dualistic aspect of Vedanta, and speak with great devotion and depth of feeling of the infinite love of the Divine Mother of the Universe. "Surrender yourself to Her," he would say, 'and she will' guide you in the right path, for she is always ready to help Her children."

The Swami as he taught and moved among us was indeed brave and patient. We had much to learn, as my friend writes, and well might he have felt disheartened at our slow understanding and waywardness, for we were not all quick and docile disciples.

(To be continued)

## THE ESSENCE OF VEDANTA

### [VEDANTASARA]

**इदमज्ञानं समष्टिव्यष्ट्यभिप्रायेणैकमनेकमिति च व्यवहियते । ३५**

35. This ignorance is said to be one<sup>1</sup> or many<sup>2</sup> according to the mode of observing it either collectively<sup>3</sup> or individually.<sup>4</sup>

[1 *One*—As in the Sruti passage, "अजमेका" (श्वेतः उपः ४-५) —"There is one unborn."

2 *Many*—As in the Sruti passage, "इन्द्रो मायामिः पुरुरूप इयते" (श्रग्वेद ६-५७-१८) "Indra through Maya assumes various shapes."

3 *Collectively*—*Samasti* means an aggregate which is considered as made up of parts which are substantially the same with the whole.

4 *Individually*—The separate units which go to constitute the aggregate.

Now doubt arises as to whether ignorance is used to denote one or many as scriptural passages may be cited in support of both. The solution is that ignorance is one when viewed from the standpoint of *Samasti* (सामान्य) and again it is many when looked upon from the standpoint of *Vyasti* (विशेष). ]



तथाहि यथा वृक्षाणां समष्टमिप्रायेण वनमित्येकत्वव्यपदेशो  
यथा वा जलानां समष्टमिप्रायेण जलाशय इति तथा नामात्वेन प्रति-  
मासमानानां जीवगताज्ञानानां समष्टमिप्रायेण तदेकत्वव्यपदेशः  
“अज्ञामेकां” (श्वे: उप: ४-५) इत्यादिभ्युत्ते: । ३६

36. For instance as trees when considered from the stand-  
point of the aggregate is denoted as one, viz., the forest, or  
water is collectively named as the reservoir, so also ignorance,  
existing<sup>1</sup> in Jivas, being<sup>2</sup> diversely manifested, is represented,  
with reference to the aggregate, as one,<sup>3</sup>—as in such  
scriptural passages, “There is one unborn”<sup>4</sup> (Svet. Up. 4. 5) etc.

[1 Existing etc.—Though Brahman is the substratum of ignorance,  
yet the effect of the latter is seen only in and through the created  
beings. Though a snake always keeps poison in its mouth it is never  
affected by the poison. The effect of the poison is seen only when the  
snake bites others.

2 Being etc.—This refers to the created beings. Though absolutely  
speaking Brahman alone exists, yet the distinction of created beings must  
be admitted from the relative standpoint, otherwise states of bondage  
and liberation become meaningless. These two states are too well-known.  
Ordinary creatures are in bondage whereas Suka, Vamadeva, etc. are  
admitted to have attained their liberation. Again the two states are  
not possible for one and the same being simultaneously. This estab-  
lishes the diversity of created beings. Besides, the scriptures admit  
the two processes of immediate and gradual (क्रम) liberation which  
also become possible when the distinction of created beings is recog-  
nised. From such distinction (जीवभेद) naturally follows the distinc-  
tion of ignorance (अज्ञावभेद), otherwise liberation from ignorance  
of one man will imply the liberation of the rest. Further it will be  
impossible for one individual to attain liberation through knowledge  
on account of others' remaining in a state of ignorance. Therefore the  
diversity of ignorance must be admitted.

3 One—If the multiplicity of creation is associated with the aggre-  
gate of ignorance, it may be contended that the liberation of one must  
imply the liberation of all. But really this question does not arise.  
There is only one Jiva; others are seen as such on account of his  
ignorance and, really speaking, they have no separate existence. When  
he is liberated through knowledge, the entire phenomena of existence  
which are the results of his own mental projection vanish away. The  
question of others' remaining in ignorance is therefore irrelevant;  
because there is no other existence separate from him. If after the  
liberation of a particular individual another being is seen in a state of  
bondage, it is due to the ignorance of the unliberated one.

4 Unborn—This refers to ignorance which is without beginning.  
The other adjectives of ignorance as given in the text are “लोहितयुक्-  
कृष्णा” —“of red, white and black colours”—and “स्वरूपा” —“like



itself". The colours refer to the three Gunas. "स्वर्पा" signifies the inexplicability of ignorance. The following scriptural passages may be quoted to prove that ignorance is one from the standpoint of the aggregate.

"मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यात्" (खेतः उपः ४-१०)—"Know Maya (ignorance) to be Prakriti (Nature)."

"अक्षरात् परतः परः" (मुण्डक उपः २-१२)—"Higher than the high imperishable (the creative Brahman associated with Maya)."

"तत्त्वे तर्हि अन्वयाकृतं" (बृः उपः १-४-७)—"Now all this was then unmanifested."

"तम आसीत् तमसा गूढम्" (श्वेदेव १०-१२६-३)—"Darkness was enveloped by darkness."

इयं समाष्टिस्तुष्टोपाधितया विशुद्धसत्त्वप्रधाना । ३७

37. This aggregate (of ignorance) on account of its being associated with Perfection (Pure Intelligence of Brahman) has a preponderance of pure<sup>1</sup> *sattva*.

[The meaning is this: Ignorance, as we have seen before, has collective as well as separate existence. Collective ignorance is associated with Brahman and the latter under its influence degenerates as it were into the phenomenal universe. The collective ignorance is superior to the individual ignorance because the former is associated with Brahman and the latter with Jiva.]

1 Pure etc.—Iswara i.e. Brahman associated with the aggregate of ignorance has three qualities viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas whose effects are seen in the acts of creation, preservation and destruction. The word *sattva* is used in the text not to denote any particular activity of Iswara but to signify that the power of ignorance cannot delude Him.]

एतदुपहितं चेतन्यं सर्वज्ञत्वसर्वश्रुत्वसर्वेनियन्तृत्वादिगुणकमव्यक्त-  
मन्तर्यामी जगत्कारणमीश्वर इति च व्यपदिश्यते सकलाज्ञानाधमासक-  
त्वात् । "यः सर्वज्ञः सर्ववित्" (मुण्डः उपः १ । १ । ६) इति श्रुतेः । ३८

38. Consciousness<sup>1</sup> associated<sup>2</sup> with this<sup>3</sup> is known to be endowed with such qualities as omniscience,<sup>4</sup> all-lordship,<sup>5</sup> all-restraining<sup>6</sup> power etc. and further It is designated as the unspeakable,<sup>7</sup> the inner guide, the cause<sup>8</sup> of the world and Iswara on account<sup>9</sup> of Its being the illuminator of the aggregate of ignorance. As in such<sup>10</sup> a Sruti passage, "Who knows all (generally), who perceives all (particularly)" (Mund. Upa.

1. 1. 9).

[1 Consciousness—Pure Brahman.

2 Associated—Brahman, as a matter of fact, is never associated with ignorance but it appears so when looked upon from the standpoint of the world. Ignorance is superimposed upon Brahman.



3 *This*—Aggregate of ignorance.

4 *Omniscience*—As It is the witness of all the animate and inanimate objects of the universe.

5 *All-lordship*—Iswara is said to be the agent that controls the rewards and punishments of the created beings according to the merits of their work.

6 *All-restraining power*—Because Iswara is the director of the mental propensities of the created beings.

7 *Unspeakable*—Because he is beyond all proofs.

8 *Cause etc.*—Because Brahman is the substratum upon which the empirical existence of the universe depends.

9 *On account etc.*—Ignorance in its collective form has been said to be the associate of Iswara whereas the created beings are influenced by its individual aspect. This aggregate of ignorance is said to be *one* and it is manifest only to Iswara.

10 *Such etc.*—Comp. “*सदेव सौम्येदम्*” (ब्रा उपा १-२-१)—“In the beginning, my dear, this (world) was only in the form of Existence.” “*एषः सेतुर्विधरवः*” (ब्रा उपा ४-४-२२)—“He is a bank and a boundary (so that these worlds may not be confounded).” “*एष स आत्मा अमर्त्याम्बुतः*” (ब्रा उपा ३-७-३)—“He is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal.” “*महता परमव्यक्तम्*” (कठ उपा ३-११)—“Beyond the Great there is the Undeveloped.” “*यतो वा इमाणि*” (ता उपा ३-१)—“That from whence these beings are born.”

The word ‘Iswara,’ properly known as ‘God,’ has a peculiar meaning in the Advaita Philosophy. The Vedantist does not believe Iswara to be the absolute existence. Because he is as unreal as the phenomenal universe. Brahman associated with ignorance is known as Iswara. The difference between Iswara and the ordinary man is that the former, though associated with Maya, is not bound by its fetters whereas the latter is its slave. Iswara is the highest manifestation of Brahman in the phenomenal universe.]

## AGATHERING FRAUGHT WITH POSSIBILITIES AND PREGNANT WITH HOPE

BY MADRLINE R. HARDING

This is how may be described a great Meeting held in the City Temple, in the heart of London.

The City Temple is one of the largest of London's churches, seating about three thousand people. It was packed to its fullest capacity. An overflow meeting was held in the large lecture hall below. That was also filled to overflowing, and in addition many hundreds of people were turned away.



And for what had they come? To hear about, or to add their sympathy to the cause of world-brotherhood.

This was the first meeting of its kind to be held in Europe. It was under the auspices of the "Fellowship of Faiths." Its object Peace and Brotherhood, as taught by Seven Living World Religions.

The movement is Three-fold—Fellowship of Faiths ; Union of East and West ; League of Neighbours. This in a Christian Church, the Christian Minister, Dr. F. W. Norwood, presiding !

And what note throbbed in all the messages? LOVE.

Ten minutes was allowed each speaker to place before the audience the ideals of the religion he represented. All breathed the same spirit—*Fellowship* of Faiths, not proselytization ; *Union* of East and West—that all racial hatred should cease, as the only means too, of ending war ; That the Great Brotherhood of man the world over, should be recognised and *lived up to*.

For the Buddhist Faith, the Hon. Dr. W. A. Silva of Ceylon, spoke ; for the Christian, Dr. Sherwood Eddy of America ; for the Confucian, Dr. Wei-Chang Chen of China sent his written message ; for the Hindu the Maharajah of Burdwan ; for the Jewish, Dr. Moses Gaster ; for the Mohammadan—as though to doubly emphasise their message—Abdul Majid and Maulvi A. R. Dard ; for the Theosophists, Dr. Annie Besant.

One and all of these messages made us say : If these people are truly representative of their religions, where is the room for bitterness between religion and religion? Where the room for Hindu-Muslim feuds? Where room for the contempt of sect for sect, and creed for creed? And above all where the room for racial strife and hatred, that sometimes even the most exquisite shade of Oriental skin will give rise to an air of superiority in the possessor of a lighter one, when too, it is a moot point in the eyes of many which is the more beautiful?

As each speaker concluded he went below and repeated his address in the hall where the great overflow meeting was being held, so that except for the inspiration of the mighty audience in the great Church, all fared alike.

Devotional music was given, the first item being The Moslem Call to Prayer by the Muezin of London Mosque.



Following a clear and emphatic speech by the Maharajah of Burdwan on Hindu ideals, world peace, and brotherhood, Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy (India's sweet musician) whose name is becoming well known here, sang to his own accompaniment on his beautiful instrument the *Dil-ruba*, which we are told means, "Comforter of the Mind."

Could Indian devotional music have been introduced to a more wonderful audience as regards numbers—(and we may perhaps say the right kind of audience)—by a more perfect artiste?

As Mr. Roy came forward to the front of the extensive rostrum (where have stood some of the greatest souls this world has known) in his picturesque national dress, the bearing of his tall form seemed to fulfil the great Swami Vivekananda's appeal—"Be proud that you are an Indian ; say every Indian is my brother ; India's soil is my highest heaven ; India's good is my good."

Perhaps few in that great audience were prepared for the beautifully modulated voice, so soft and exquisitely sweet, yet filling every corner of the great Temple. But first, it was as though he said : There shall be no misunderstanding by this great representative audience ; this song I am about to render shall not by any manner of means be taken as an example of idol worship, according to the "Missionary School of Painting". Therefore he gave in a clear voice, audible to everyone in that vast gathering, the English translation, before singing it in Bengali. It was—

## MIRABAI

(Waiting)

O make me servant Thine !

For Thee I'll make a garden fair and bright,  
Where every morning Thou wilt crown my sight.

In all Vrindâvan's groves with greenness gay,  
My songs of Thee will ring all night and day.

With greenest glory my garden will be dight,  
With flowing streams' and laughing mountains' play.

And Thee, O Presence, evergreen ! I'll greet  
Amid my vernal bowers with blossoms sweet.



The Yogi comes in meditation deep,  
The naked hermit his penance' fruit to reap.  
The devotee doth come to Vrindâvan,  
For worshipping his Lord, his dearest One.  
But strange, O Mira ! Is thy Master's will !  
Be still, tempestuous heart ! O soul ! be still !  
For He will come at midnight to thy grove,  
Beside the waters of the stream of Love.

These exquisite words must have prepared hearts for beauty in the music which followed, even if the strains were unusual to many.

The applause was great and genuine. Mr. Roy then descended, as others had done, to *give* to the waiting hundreds below.

The gathering closed with a Christian hymn to the world-embracing All-Father God, in which every heart could join. The beautiful organ pealed out a magnificent voluntary as the thousands poured out into the busy London streets.

The Honorary organisers of this meeting were Mr. Kedar Nath Das Gupta and Mr. Charles Frederick Weller of America. May this work for brotherhood become a living power in every corner of the earth !

## **AN ORIENTAL LOOKS AT THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONS**

BY JOHN JESUDASON CORNELIUS

(Continued from the last issue.)

The Westernizing process is not confined to India. The anti-Christian movement of China similarly accuses Christianity of being a Westernizing force. The mission schools are accused of having grossly neglected to emphasize Chinese culture and literature. This charge is substantiated by the fact that as a rule graduates of mission schools are woefully lacking in a knowledge of Chinese literature and in an ability to express themselves in correct Chinese. Let us suppose that the children of some of the schools in the state of New Jersey were taught Confucianism as the best code of morals ; the geography, not



of New Jersey and the United States, but of Manchuria, Peking, Canton, etc. ; the history, not of the United States, but of the Chinese Dynasties and the Republic ; let us suppose that they were taught a little English but much of Chinese, that they were trained to write Chinese with ease and to speak it with fluency ; and that the whole system of education was based not on the American philosophy of education and pedagogy but on the Chinese. Would you say that these schools were training the young to take their places as intelligent citizens of the American republic ?

Even though such an education were financed by Chinese capital and carried on with a purely philanthropic motive, would not Americans revolt against such an un-American system of education ? Would not the American Government be justified if it required the registration of all the schools for American children conducted by the Chinese, and if it legislated in such a way that in course of time these schools would become American in the personnel of their administrative staff, in their supporting constituencies and legal relationships, in the content of their curricula, and above all in their entire atmosphere ? This is exactly what the anti-Christian movement wants to do with all the schools conducted by the missions for the Chinese children. It wants these schools, instead of being Westernizing and denationalizing centers, to become radiating centers for a higher nationalism fitting in with the whole educational structure. Not a wicked ambition, is it ? Hence it is that the Chinese Government requires the registration of all mission schools.

The Chinese Christian Community, much like the Indian Christian Community referred to elsewhere, tends to become isolated from the rest of the people. In China the right to preach throughout the empire and the protection of law for their lives and property, were given to the missionaries as a result of concessions wrung from the Chinese Government by foreign powers. The American Treaty with China, Article 14, has a clause which reads thus : "Any person, whether citizen of the United States or Chinese convert, who according to these tenets peaceably teaches and practices principles of Christianity, shall in no case be interfered with or molested therefor."

Such agreements placed the Chinese Christians under the



protection of foreign powers. Even some incorrigible criminals became Christian nominally in order to escape lawful punishment. It was only as the protector of the faith of the converts, to be sure, that a foreign power could intervene legally, but in practice the result was to separate the Chinese Christian from the mass of his fellow-countrymen and sometimes to help criminals to evade the law. Such treaties dealt a serious blow to the prestige and sovereignty of the Chinese State, as they resulted practically in removing the Chinese Christians from its jurisdiction.

The political complications of Christianity, much as we may regret it, have brought about the inevitable consequence—animosity. The political and commercial penetration of the West has engendered a new spirit in the East. The rising tide of nationalism, as it is called, is not a desire to be aggressive but a longing to be free to determine its own destiny and to live naturally and normally within its own boundary unhampered by foreign interference. Western Christianity, according to the present temper of the East, has been philanthropic in profession but political in action. It is compelled not to further the national aspirations of the people but to exert its influence in the interests of alien governments. The Eastern will to be free and its passionate desire to throw off all foreign domination have begun, therefore, to make themselves felt in the domain of religion also.

#### IV

Along with the political imperialism of the West, the religious imperialism of Christianity has added much to arouse the spirit of hostility in the East. The religious hospitality of the Orient is due to the recognition that while there is only one God, there are many approaches to him. The Hindu would say that just as the many rivers which swell by rain-drops empty themselves into one mighty ocean, so also the devotees of all religions enriched by their various religious experiences, find their way to the bosom of the One Infinite Being. But a Christian does not seem to look at it that way, and the attempt of the missionary appears to be to make Christianity the Nordic among religions. Perhaps the Semitic background of Christianity is responsible to a large extent for



its exclusiveness. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me : . . . . for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God," said the Semite. Coupled with the intemperate aggressiveness of the Western nations, the simple religion of the humble Nazarene has become the most aggressive, exclusive, and powerfully organized religion in the world. The Nordic-complex in religion shows itself clearly in all Christian literature. Take, for instance, the hymn "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" and go through verse after verse ; it will surprise one that such hymns are found in Christian hymnals. Glance at some of the lines :

The *heathen* in his blindness  
Bows down to wood and stone.  
Shall *we*, whose souls are *lighted*  
With *wisdom* from on high,  
Shall *we* to men *benighted*  
The lamp of life deny?

Notice the striking Christian modesty in this hymn, composed by a bishop ! Another Christian, like Bishop Heber, is Kipling of immortal fame. He sings thus :

Ship me somewheres east of Suez,  
Where the best is like the worst ;  
Where there ain't no ten commandments  
And a man can raise a thirst.

It never occurred to him that the ten commandments were not the creation of his forefathers and that they really had their origin "east of Suez." In fact, it is the East which has given all the great religions of to-day, not excluding Christianity.

In order to establish the superiority of Christianity the missionaries had to write volumes on the differences between religions. No one will question the fact that all missionary literature is for definite ends. The object of such writers has been to show the superiority of Christianity by giving it a background of the horrors of the "heathen" religions, to arouse an interest in the missionary enterprise by portraying the "unspeakable" immorality and evils of non-Christian societies, and finally to make the reader an enthusiastic supporter for the enterprise, financially and otherwise.



Imagine for a moment what a picture India would have of America if most of what she knew of America were from the writings of workers in the slums, of the anti-saloonists, of the crime investigators, of the red-light-district workers, and of other such good people! If such literature flooded the markets of India for a half century, nay even for a quarter of a century, it would be as impossible for an American in India to convince the people brought up on such literature that Americans do not marry only to divorce, that killing one another is not the pastime of Americans, and that banks exist in spite of robbery, as it is for an Indian in America to convince those brought up on missionary literature that girl babies are not thrown into the Ganges, that the people of India are not savages, that social evils are not the monopoly of the East.

Just as I am writing these lines I see before me a recent number of the *Modern Review* of Calcutta. It contains a review by Agnes Smedly, an English lady, of a recent missionary book, *Among the Women of the Punjab*, written by Miriam Young. The English reviewer says: "Were it not for the fact that this book is a propaganda document against India, no person of intelligence would read more than ten pages of it without throwing it aside in disgust. In it the missionary mind stands stripped naked as not only an unfair primitive mind but a mind that tells deliberate falsehoods when necessary. If I knew nothing of India and read this book, I would finish by thinking that the Indians are a very low uncultured people, that all the men are foul-mouthed and the women sit about picking lice out of each other's hair."

How can such missionary literature fail to produce ill-feeling? It has been one of the potent causes of the "modest" assumption of the superiority of the West, especially as the unspeakable immorality of Western night life, the appalling social irregularities and the miseries and filth of Western slums, have not yet been sufficiently exposed in the Orient. If one can see to what an alarming extent the missionary literature is responsible for the deplorable one-sided information—and that the worse side—which the West possesses and to what an extent this literature is responsible for its superiority complex, in that alone one would find enough justification for the revolt of the East against the whole missionary enterprise!



## V

Just as they paint the dark side of the East for the West, so they paint the brighter side of the West for the consumption of the East. But with the growth of cultural intercourse with the West, the East is discovering things for herself about the assumed superiority of the West. The present anti-Christian attitude is a challenge based on increasing first-hand knowledge of the failure of Christianity to influence the lives of Western peoples. In days of old it used to be said that the lives of Europeans who lived in the East were obstacles to the progress of Christianity out there. But to-day in the life of the West itself Christianity—to the Eastern observer—stands exposed and condemned.

The rapidly growing commercial intercourse and the opportunities for practical education bring a large number of Oriental sojourners to the West. Every year students are coming in ever-increasing numbers to American universities. There are now about two thousand students from China, about one thousand from Japan, two thousand from the Philippine Islands, and about three hundred from India. They come here to prepare themselves to be of some service and leadership in their homelands. They undoubtedly carry back impressions of the West. Are such impressions pro-Christian or anti-Christian? Some of the Oriental students have seen with their own eyes the ghastly sight of the negro being riddled with bullets by angry mobs under a "civilized" administration. They understand a caste system fostered by religion as in India, but they do not understand a caste system opposed by the teachings of Jesus but upheld by the churches of the South. These and like experiences of un-Christian practices are broadcasted in the East, and the non-Christian sees in them a wide gulf between the teachings of Jesus and the practice of his professed followers. The Mohammedan, therefore, speaks of his religion as being much more practical and democratic; so also the Chinese upholds Confucianism as a livable code of morality, and the Hindu says that Christianity being idealistic, the West is not prepared to pay the price for it, and hence that it is not of much use in daily life.

When Dr. C. W. Gilkey was in India last winter, as the



Barrows Lecturer sent by the University of Chicago, he was told that the Hindus once thought of America as the land of Christian idealism and of opportunity, but that now they think of it as the land which insults the Hindus, excludes the Asiatics, and lynches the Negro. Now that the social evils of the West are being exposed in the Orient, the East is losing confidence in the religion of the West. How can an anti-Christian attitude be prevented if the Western Christians, in the face of such facts, claim exclusive superiority? "The Western peoples in spite of their Christianity, are just as bad as the Eastern 'heathens'; why should we allow the West to yoke us with a foreign religion which is so unrelated to our life?" asks the anti-Christian movement. The excellence of the life lived by the devotee of a religion is the best vindication of its superiority. Judged by this standard Christianity appears to the East as a failure. "But," says the missionary, "it has not yet been tried." "If it has not been tried in the West during its history of nearly two thousand years," the anti-Christian Oriental asks, "then why try it on us?"

The East has not only seen how the missionary's religion falls short of practice in its homelands, but the incoming of such large numbers of students has helped it to see also how money is raised to carry on the Christian propaganda. The East has seen itself misrepresented, has seen how the darkest side of Eastern life is presented and how money is raised by appeal to pity and condescension. With the awakening of national pride the Eastern peoples are no longer willing to see their countries sold for a mess of pottage. The Orientals naturally revolt against an organized religion which for the sake of money to propagate itself so humiliates them in the eyes of others. Such methods adopted for the express purpose of raising money and for the justification of the missionary enterprise, have not helped the West and the East to mutual respect. Only an interpretation of the higher idealism of both countries will bring about good will.

## VI

Very few are conscious of the great contribution the Oriental students are making both to their own countries and to the Western countries in general and to America in particular. By



their friendly criticism resulting from a different view of life, they have made some Americans re-evaluate hitherto accepted standards of the West. By openly challenging in speech and in writing those who misrepresent the East and falsely interpret Oriental religions because of an erroneous familiarity with them, the Oriental students are rendering valuable service to the cause of better mutual understanding. This attitude of the Oriental students is characterized by some as "anti-Western" but it will be nearer the truth to say that it is "pro-Eastern." This attitude has helped toward a new appreciation of Oriental culture and a growing conviction that the East has something to give to the West. In fairness to the progressive minority in the missions it must also be said that changes are being effected by younger men with liberal ideas. It is extremely gratifying to see the changes now taking place in the policy of foreign missions. The missionary press is beginning to put forth more sensible literature. Though this change has taken place only within the last few years, yet it promises a brighter future of appreciation and co-operation between East and West.

Like the pain before birth, the anti-Christian attitude in the East and the pro-Eastern attitude in the West are causing great concern in certain quarters. The old tales do not sell, the old methods do not work, and money is not forthcoming for the saving of "heathen souls." It is neither the anti-Christian nor the pro-Eastern attitude which is solely responsible for the financial difficulties of Foreign Missions Boards. To some extent these are responsible, no doubt, but the throwing overboard of the old theology is also responsible. Modernism has knocked the bottom out of the old reward-morality and many of the Christians do not seem to be much interested now in the saving of souls. Nor is the East anxious to welcome missionaries on the old basis.

Says the anti-Christian movement, "If you are coming only to help your commercial and political interests, if you are coming only to destroy our national cultures, if you are interested only in making a Buddhist into a Baptist, a Mohammedan into a Methodist, and a Confucianist into a Catholic, then it would be better not to trouble yourself." The old economic theories, the old imperialism, the old ethics of international relations are all giving way, and modernism is disintegrating the old missionary



motive. The present situation is certainly a challenge—a challenge to renounce our Christianity and follow Christ.

The inner meaning of the anti-Christian movement must now be clear. It is a call to Christianity to disentangle itself from all its political complications, to substitute disinterested service for proselytizing as its motive, to seek to supplement and not to supplant, to be domestic and not foreign, to be concerned more with life and less with dogma. Herein lies the challenge! To the extent that one sees its significance and strives to meet it, to that extent one will be able to perceive the dawn of a brighter day. God is one and truth is universal. There are several ways of realizing the Infinite to meet the individual needs and differences of people. One person may realize Him in social service, another in worship and meditation, and still another in ascetic practice. Each of these ways may be imperfect and unsatisfying, but it is the sharing of religious experiences which helps to perfect that which is imperfect.

The fundamental object of all religion is the same: the promotion of love, peace, good living, and the general welfare of all human beings. "Instead of hating and killing each other because of differences in faiths," says the East, "let us join hands to destroy vice and to promote virtue throughout the world." But such loyal co-operation in human service is not possible so long as there is religion in imperialism and imperialism in religion.\*

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Nirmalananda at Trivandrum

The members of the *Hindu Vanitha Sangham*, Trivandrum (S. India), mustered strong on the evening of the 9th July last in the local Museum lecture hall to listen to the learned address of Swami Nirmalananda of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission. Precisely at 3-30 P.M. the meeting began with prayers and music. Swamiji arrived at about 4-30 P.M. and delivered an inspiring address in English touching upon the various problems affecting the welfare of Indian women in general and Travancore women in particular. In the course of his address, the learned lecturer dwelt upon the practical aspect of Hinduism which was best fitted for home life which was rendered so sweet by the hallowed presence and teachings of an ideal Hindu mother. Unlike

\* From *Harpers Magazine*, New York.



the custom in Western countries, particularly America, Indian, and especially Hindu women, preferred a solemn conclave of their own sex to the mixed artificial audience where so much of decorum had to be observed. There was no reason to discourage this as the social and domestic needs of the two countries were found to differ. A rare type of Hindu mother was Sri Ramakrishna's wife. She wanted Sri Ramakrishna to teach her Realisation so that she might also enjoy the sight of God. When Ramakrishna entered Samadhi, this paragon of virtue prostrated at his feet and called him Mother. This was true realisation. But our women could not and need not for the present aspire for such spiritual bliss. They can be more concerned with worldly prosperity in order that they may clothe the ragged and succour the needy and lowly. Above all they should pay particular attention to the training of their children since, as Emerson said, a country's greatness depends upon the future citizens. At the same time, children should not be allowed to imitate them in rituals but should grasp the significance of each sacred custom. Girls should be taught to sing without the drowning effect of harmoniums. Pure music and fine arts should be encouraged. It is not enough if a thing is good. It should be used properly. A Hindu mother's responsibility was indeed great since the father often found it impossible to devote any attention to his children. There was no harm in imitating Westerners in the training up of children, but a wholesale imitation was to be condemned. Children should imbibe the sanitary and hygienic methods of the West, but not their dandyism. There was then the question of marriage which should be based on principle. The wife is to share the pleasures and pains of the husband intelligently. Sri Ramakrishna's marriage was an extreme type. When Sri Ramakrishna was about to breathe his last, he seems to have said to his wife, "No one is as fortunate as you are. Some might have great daughters. You are the mother of an illustrious son (referring to Swami Vivekananda)." The regeneration of India lies in the hands of the Indian mothers. Let mother India be the mother of many noble Indian mothers. Let religion be the foundation of greatness. See that the children are brought up properly and the goal is in view.

In spite of the Swamiji's introductory remarks that he was least fitted to address an audience composed purely of women, the lecture was listened to with rapt attention as it contained precious gems of wisdom. Swamiji's speech was with characteristic eloquence and clarity translated into chaste Malayalam by Swamiji's disciple, Padmanabhau Tampi. After this was over, there was again music accompanied by Kolattam.

Mrs. Narayanan Nair then made a nice speech thanking the lecturer for his brilliant address and explaining the scope of the Hindu Vanitha Sangham, after which Swami Nirmalananda made a few concluding remarks by way of thanking the Hindu Vanitha Sangham members for giving him an opportunity to meet and talk to them. The meeting then dispersed.



**R. K. Mission Sevashram, Rangoon**

The following happy remarks were made by the Editor of the *Rangoon Times*, Rangoon, on the local R. K. Mission Sevashram, in one of his recent issues :

On the north side of the section of Merchant street that passes through East Rangoon there may be seen, in the midst of a severely industrial area, a square of pleasant green with homely looking buildings standing at intervals, neatly constructed and tended. This is the Ramakrishna Charitable Hospital. It is under the auspices of a great Indian philanthropic society the influence of which has not only extended from India to Burma but has been established in Europe and America. There could hardly be an institution the funds of which are expended more directly upon its objects and less on its own administrative expenses, for it is carried on by monks of ascetic habits of life and having no interests beyond their work and the goodness emanating from it. By this it cannot be judged that the institution is sectarian. If the ministrations of the hospitals are limited to a class it is to the class defined by poverty only, for among the patients are Burmans, Hindus and Mahomedans and indeed both the out-treatment and the wards are available to all. The Rangoon Ramakrishna Charitable Hospital is in charge of Swami Shyamananda, who, despite an unobtrusive personality and vocation, is known by a good many people belonging to all the communities, and is respected where he is known.

There are a great many calls on the purse in Rangoon at the present time . . . . . but no apology is needed for keeping its unique activities before the public, and since a great deal more money is required for carrying on the work than is forthcoming from the limited sources of regular income, any sums able to be spared will be greatly appreciated, and we are able to state that they could scarcely be better given to better effect. . . . . It is true that the functions of this charitable hospital and those of the Rangoon General Hospital nominally overlap. The charitable hospital, like the general hospital, provides treatment, in and out, with Western drugs; and the general hospital, like the charitable hospital, gives treatment free, where necessary. But the Ramakrishna is frankly engaged in helping the very poor and ignorant indeed, and rightly feels that it has a claim to public sympathy for this precise reason. . . . . The charitable hospital is serving, among other purposes, those of relieving the pressure on the public hospital in regard to a certain class of patients and providing a refuge for many whose abject lowliness and timidity in such that many of them would die rather than venture into an official-looking building. . . . .

Ordinary public hospitals, too, cannot manage to be so leisurely as the Ramakrishna . . . . . The monks at the hospital are resigned to bear with the ignorance of the patients in a manner that would be impossible in a regular institution. The number of patients dealt with at the Ramakrishna hospital is second not only in Rangoon but in the whole of Burma to that dealt with by the Rangoon General



Hospital. When it is realised that the work has attained this magnitude without any semblance of official administration and control and with only very limited official financial aid it will be admitted that it represents a most worthy achievement. Sometimes when India appears to be dark with evil passions and disfigured by excrescences of hatred of religion and class, it is good to dwell upon pictures of self-sacrifice and purposeful loving kindness such as are made by the Ramakrishna hospital, and to reflect that the land from which such inspiration is drawn must be fundamentally sweet-natured.

**Swami Prabhavananda at the Reed College, Portland, U. S. A.**

Swami Prabhavananda was invited by the authorities of the Reed College, Portland, Oregon, to give a discourse on Vedanta. His lecture was attended by the students and professors who proved to be a very appreciative audience. The Swami spoke on "What is Vedanta." In the course of his speech he showed how the researches in the field of modern science tend towards the ultimate conclusions arrived at, centuries ago, by the great seers of India.

After the lecture the Swami was the guest of honour at a lunch given by the Professors. And they had interesting chats about India.

The Professor of Philosophy took particular interest in the Vedanta teachings and promised to invite the Swami next session to give a course of lessons on Hindu ethics and sociology to the philosophy class of senior students.

This will give the Swami a new and a greater field of work in America.

**Swami Raghavananda**

Swami Raghavananda who went to America in 1923 to work at the New York Vedanta Centre, left for India Via Europe in last June. He is expected to reach here shortly.

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Syamm Saradananda



# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निधीयत ।

*Katha Upa. I. §§. 14.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE

(Continued from the last issue)

It was about evening when word was brought that Maku's son was in a critical condition. Mother became very anxious and said to Brahmachari Barada: "Arrange for a palanquin. I must go to see him to-morrow morning if he still lives. But who will bring me word to-morrow morning?"

Manindra offered to go with Satu early to Jayrambati to bring the news of the child.

A little after Baikuntha Maharaj arrived from Jayrambati. At this Mother started up and exclaimed: "Is the child then no more?" An ominous silence followed. Mother asked: "When did he die?"

Baikuntha.—At half past five.

Mother.—Shall I find him if I go now?

Baikuntha.—No, Mother, they have taken him away for cremation.

Mother began to cry bitterly. Swami Kesavananda tried to console her. But she said: "O Kedar,\* I cannot forget  
1!"

\* Swami Kesavananda's lay name.



Maku's son was a wonderful child. Before leaving for Jayrambati with his mother last time, he had procured some *gulan* flowers, and having laid them at Mother's feet, had said: "See, aunt,\* how beautiful it has been!" He had then saluted her taking the dust from her feet, and having put a few of the offered flowers in his pocket, went away. He was dearly beloved of Swami Saradananda whom he used to call "Red Uncle" and eagerly called for him during his illness.

Mother said: "He was perhaps a devotee in his former birth and this was probably his last incarnation. Or how could he, a child of three years, be so intelligent and worship so devoutly? Oh great is my suffering now for having brought him up!" . . .

Next morning when Manindra and Prabhakar went to Mother, they found her still very mournful. She said: "He used to ask one: 'Who has made the flowers red?' I would reply: 'The Lord has made so.' 'Why?' 'To adorn himself.' . . . Sarat† will feel it keenly. He used often to take him on his lap, though his own legs were painful. Sitting on Sarat's lap, he would ask him: 'Where is your mother?' Sarat would point to Maku and say: 'Here is my mother.' 'No,' he would rejoin, 'your mother is in the School.'" (Mother was then staying at the Nivedita School House nursing her niece Radhu who was seriously ill.)

Manindra observed that the passing of Akshay also had deeply grieved the Master.

Mother.—Yes. He said his heart was wrung like a towel. One of my distant nephews, Dinu by name, used to worship at the Vishnu temple. Hriday used to officiate at the Kali temple. Dinu used to sing devotional songs to the Master. He had an attack of cholera.

Manindra.—Were you then at Dakshineswar?

Mother.—Yes, I used to live at the *nahaval*. We tried our best to save Dinu, but he died. This caused the Master great sorrow. . . .

This world is a snare of Maya . . . (Plaintively) Ah, we could not bear to have him out of sight even while he was sleeping!—Such was Maku's son! And now he is gone, Oh, how painful! . . . How much have I not suffered by bringing up Radhu! To bring up any one is always extremely painful. Once during worship, a veil seemed to be suddenly lifted and I saw that Radhu's mother was suffering and Radhu was squatting on the dust in the courtyard, eating plain puffed rice, with red and blue threads on her arms tied there by her

\* Though Mother was his grand-aunt, yet he used to call her aunt in imitation of his mother.

† Swami Saradananda.



mad mother. The vision seemed to suffocate me, and I felt that Radhu would indeed be in that miserable plight if I forsook her.

Mother was specially fond of her youngest brother. In his dying moment he requested her to look after his family. His wife was then with child. When Radhu was born, Mother brought them to Calcutta. But soon Radhu's mother lost her reason and had to be sent back to Jayrambati. There Radhu suffered much for want of care. One day while Mother was performing worship at the chapel in the Monastery at Bagh-bazar, Calcutta, she saw the above-mentioned vision, and remembering her brother's dying request, went very soon to Jayrambati and took Radhu into her personal care. Mother used to say that with that she came under the sway of Maya.

Once while she was lying seriously ill at Koalpara, Radhu suddenly left her and went away to Jayrambati to go to her husband. She had said to Mother: "You have so many disciples to look after you. But I have none but my husband." Next day Mother remarked: "Yesterday when Radhu suddenly severed all ties of affection and went away, I felt frightened and thought that the Master perhaps did not want me to survive this illness. . . . This attachment for Radhu is only a tie of Maya to bind me to this life."\*

Slowly it became dark. Manindra and Prabhakar would leave that night for Arambag. They prepared to take leave of the Mother.

Mother asked them to take some refreshments. Prabhakar said: "We have already taken our meal." But Mother insisted on their having something and ordered some sweets to be served them.

Mother.—Start after your night meal.

Manindra.—Yes, Mother.

Mother.—Have you arranged for carriage?

Manindra.—Yes, Mother.

When they saluted her before departing, Mother blessed them saying: "May you have devotion to the Lord!"

Manindra.—Mother, bless us that we may be freed from Maya.

Mother looked pleased at this prayer.

[*Verily, this divine illusion of Mine, constituted of the Gunas, is difficult to cross over; those who devote themselves to Me alone, cross over this illusion.—The Gita.*]

(To be continued)

\* The Hindu idea is that without some attachment the body cannot live.



## **SWAMI SARADANANDA**

BY THE EDITOR

Swami Saradananda, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, passed away at the age of 63, at 2-30 A.M., on Friday, the 10th August. His death has been a profound and irreparable loss to the Order and to the innumerable devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. What his death means to the country, what a precious asset his life was to the nation, few possibly can truly understand yet. He has lived a life of comparative seclusion and his activities scarcely appeared in the lime-light. But with the growth of the Order and the acceptance of its principles and methods of work in larger measures by the nation, it will surely come to feel that he was in essence one of the greatest builders of the Indian nation at the foundation of which he had been silently and steadily working for the last thirty years. What the Ramakrishna Mission is to-day is largely due to Swami Saradananda. The Mission, though it derived its ideals and inspiration from other sources, owes its present articulate form mainly to the endeavours of the departed Swami. It is he who worked at it from its very inception, giving the ideals concrete forms, linking them to the problems of the passing years, till it reached its present advanced state of development. The outside world has learnt to praise its philanthropic activities and its dynamic ideals, but it scarcely knew the man who primarily worked at the details of the machinery. In the meantime the hearts that received the gracious touch of his love are desolate ; the golden chain that linked their worlds to the Eternal is broken ; and a window of Heaven through which streamed the light of God on their life seems closed.

Swami Saradananda or Saratchandra Chakravarti as he was known before he renounced the world, came of a pious Brahmin family of Calcutta. As a young student he was a member of a Brahmo Association started under the inspiration of Keshub Chandra Sen, and through that he came to learn of Sri Ramakrishna. One afternoon in October, 1883, when the association was holding its anniversary festival at the Dakshineswar Temple, he went with a cousin to pay a visit to Sri Ramakrishna in his room. Sri Ramakrishna received them graciously and after a few preliminary enquiries said: "Bricks and tiles, if burnt with the trade-mark on them, retain those marks for ever. Similarly you should enter the world after advancing a little



in the path of spirituality. Then you will not sink in the mire of worldliness. But now-a-days parents get their boys married while quite young, and thus pave the way to their ruin. The boys come out of school, to find themselves fathers of several children. So they run hither and thither in search of a job to maintain the family. With great difficulty perhaps they find one, but are so perplexed to feed so many mouths with that small income. They become naturally anxious to earn money and therefore find little time to think of God." "Then, Sir, is it wrong to marry? Is it against the will of God?" asked one of the boys. Sri Ramakrishna asked him to take down from the shelf a certain book and directed him to read a particular passage in it where the following opinion of Christ on marriage was quoted: "For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive." And St. Paul's: "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." When the passage was read, Sri Ramakrishna remarked that marriage was at the root of all bondage.\* Thus at their very first meeting Sri Ramakrishna struck the note of highest renunciation. We can well understand that these strong words were gladly received by Sarat. For at the very first sight of him Sri Ramakrishna is said to have remarked that the young man was endowed with a stern spirit of renunciation.

Sarat felt deeply attracted by the Master and became a frequent visitor at Dakshineswar; and soon became one of his staunch followers. When he first visited Sri Ramakrishna he was a student of the St. Xavier's College, Calcutta, studying in the F. A. class. After passing the examination, he joined the Medical College. But on the passing away of their Master, he was persuaded by Swami Vivekananda, then known as Narendranath, to renounce the world along with a few other young disciples, and joined what has now become known as the Ramakrishna Order of monks. Sarat always entertained a great love and reverence for his great brother-disciple, Swami Vivekananda. These ties of love were formed at the feet of their Master, in the days of their discipleship at Dakshineswar. And this is significant. For this love and faith were absolutely necessary in one who was to carry out in later days the wishes of Sri Ramakrishna's Lieutenant.

Sri Ramakrishna, as was usual with him, had pointed out

\* From *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*.



to him the particular spiritual ideal that he was to follow and realise. On one occasion, Sri Ramakrishna was praising Ganesha for his great filial love and absolute purity of heart. Sarat was present in the audience. He said at once: "Sir, I like this idea very much. The Ganesha-ideal is my ideal." "No," Sri Ramakrishna at once corrected him and said: "Ganesha is not your ideal. Your ideal is Shiva. In you lie dormant the attributes of Shiva. Always think of yourself as Shiva and me as your Shakti. I am the ultimate repository of all your powers." It is not for us ordinary mortals to correctly understand the significance of this spiritual prescription. But even a casual visitor of the Swami did not fail to mark the Shiva-like serenity of his mind, gravity of character and suavity of temper; and verily he drank 'poison' from many a cup of life, giving the disciples in return his heartfelt benedictions and blessings.

At Baranagore where the first monastery of the Order was situated, strenuous and wonderful days of *tapasya* and Divine ecstasy were spent by the monks. Their whole heart was set on God. Narendranath often spoke highly of Sarat's meditation and spiritual fervour. But even this hard *tapasya* did not satisfy the monks and the life of wandering soon lured them out into the open road. After visiting Puri, Swami Saradananda left Calcutta and started on a pilgrimage to the Himalayas. He visited Kedarnath and Badrinarayan and came to Almora. Those were days of great hardship and *tapasya*. He also passed sometime at Hrishikesh practising severe Sadhana. After that—spending thus several years in fruitful Sadhana—he returned to the Baranagore monastery. He did not live there long before he was called by Swami Vivekananda in 1895 to join him in London.

Swami Saradananda reached London in April. After some time, at the earnest requests of the Vedanta students of America, Swami Vivekananda sent him to New York. His sweet and gentle personality and his masterly exposition of the Vedanta philosophy proved at once attractive. He was invited to be one of the teachers in the Greenacre Conference of Comparative Religions, and there lectured on Vedanta and held classes on the Yoga systems. After the close of the sessions, he lectured in Brooklyn, New York and Boston. At the Brooklyn Ethical Association he lectured on the Ethical Ideas of the Hindus. Everywhere he made friends and won staunch followers for the cause of Vedanta. He finally settled down in New York to carry on the Vedanta work in an organised way. There was no doubt that he was making an impression among some of the best people in New York and its environs, as the reports of his work at this time testify. He also taught at the Cambridge conferences. "In Cambridge the classes in the Vedanta Philo-



sophy, constituting a single feature in the broad field of comparative study outlined for the Cambridge conferences, attracted large and intelligent audiences, in part made up of professors and students of the Harvard University. The Swami's exposition of the principles of the Advaita doctrine, in just comparison with other views which are held in India, was admirably lucid and clear. His replies to questions were always ready and satisfactory. His great fairness of mind and soundness of judgment enabled him to present the doctrine in a manner which at once convinced all of his sincerity and earnestness, while it disarmed the factious oppositions which are sometimes stirred up by a more dogmatic and assertive manner. In Boston, Waltham and Worcester, Mass., the Swami Saradananda also conducted courses of lectures which were largely attended and which everywhere manifested a sustained interest in his subject. At Worcester he addressed the students of the Clark University by invitations of President G. Stanley Hall, and in Providence, R. I., he spoke before the Philosophical Club of the Brown University by invitation of Prof. E. B. Delabarre whose guest he was in the city."

Just at this time when he was at the height of his usefulness in America, Swami Vivekananda recalled him to India to help him in organising the monastery at Belur. He reached India in early February, 1898 and devoted himself to the duties for which he was called, and became the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, which he continued to be till his dying day. After his return from America, he gave a series of lectures on the Religion of Vedanta in the Albert Hall, which were highly appreciated by the Calcutta public. He also subsequently gave a series of learned lectures on the Vedas and the Gita, in a conversational style, which were very popular. About this time, he went to Kathiawar and East Bengal on preaching tours. After that, and especially after the passing of Swami Vivekananda in 1902, the responsibilities of organising and managing the growing work of the Order fell principally on him, and he settled down to the quiet discharge of his onerous duties. Very soon the editorial work of the Bengali monthly organ of the Order, *Udbodhan*, also fell on him. Henceforward he passed his days at the Baghbazur monastery, Calcutta, toiling at the multifarious works of the Organisation with whole-hearted devotion, unexhausted zeal and tireless patience, combining with the duties of secretaryship much private preaching, spiritual training of disciples and writing work.

The thought of Swami Saradananda invariably brings to our mind the picture of the ideal man as variously depicted in the Gita. He was the perfect *Sthita-prajna*, the man of steady wisdom. He was the ideal devotee of whom it has been said :



"He who has no enemy and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of 'me' and 'mine,' even-minded in pleasure and pain, and forbearing, ever content and steady in meditation, self-controlled, possessed of firm conviction, with mind and intellect fixed on Me,—he who is thus devoted to Me, is dear to Me." Swami Saradananda was indeed dear to the Lord, and his soul was fragrant with all the graces ennumerated of the Lord's beloved. To those who knew him intimately, he seemed almost perfect with his deep spirituality, intellectual acumen and above all, his wonderful character. He was equally great in the graces of the head, hand and heart. This unique synthesis, was the main reason which, apart from his intense spirituality, made him a centre of irresistible attraction.

In trying to understand him, we come upon four distinct elements which combined to make him what he was. These were (1) his intense spirituality, (2) his prominent human qualities which were innate in him and were cultured to perfection, (3) his intellectual equipments and (4) his faithful submission to the commands of his great chief, Swami Vivekananda.

It would be impertinent on our part to seek to measure his spiritual achievements. But it could easily be felt that they were of the very highest order. It is said that during the early days of his discipleship, Sri Ramakrishna once asked him how he liked to realise God and what divine visions he liked to see in meditation. The Swami replied: "I do not want to see any particular form of God in meditation. I want to see Him manifested in all creatures of the world. I do not like visions." The Master said with a smile: "That is the last word about spiritual attainment. You cannot have it all at once." "But I won't be satisfied with anything short of that," replied the disciple, "I shall trudge on in the path of religious practice till that blessed state arrives." We have reasons to infer that that blessed state did arrive to him. In dedicating his little book, *Bharate Sakti-puja*, the Swami himself admits that he has realised the special presence of the Divine Mother in all womankind. We are also told that on one occasion, being asked by some young monks if he had realised the highest truth, he jocosely remarked that he did not spend his days at Dakshineswar in "cutting grass,"\* and observed that whatever he had written in his great book on Sri Ramakrishna about spiritual realities, was from his own experience. The signs of the highest spiritual realisations as described in the sacred books were certainly manifest in him.

A characteristic habit of the Swami was his aptitude for *tapasya*. Contemplation and meditation were constant and

\* A Bengali phrase meaning "wasting time or opportunity."



natural with him. In the beginning of his Indian work he used to meditate whole nights without the least sense of fatigue ; and he said that unless one kept intimate relations with God, one was likely to lose oneself in one's activities, and that a life of action without constant meditation and communion with God alienated one from God and spirituality and dragged one to the world. All his time was taken up by either work or Sadhana. Even during the last years when his health broke down, he kept up this habit and in spite of doctor's warning, spent long hours in meditation. To frequent and earnest requests to desist, his only reply was a sweet smile. And this ardour increased with the passing of days.

This *tapasya* made all his actions perfect. It was noticeable in the purity of his love and affection, wonderful self-denial and patience. It is not that whoever is spiritual would have these qualities in remarkable degrees. These have to be innate in a man or assiduously cultivated by him. But their perfection depends assuredly on a high spiritual development. Many of the human qualities were inborn with Swami Saradananda and were carefully cultured by him, and his high spirituality made them perfect. Of these qualities, the most prominent perhaps was his great universal love grounded on utter renunciation of self-interests and self-sacrifice in the service of others. That is also what endowed him with a marvellous patience and steadiness. To his love every life that came in touch with him bears testimony. It was like cool moonlight in a summer night. There was no demonstrativeness in it, it was silently potent and deep. It was not confined within the members of the monastic order and his intimate acquaintances, but was extended to all who even casually approached him. All erring individuals found shelter under his great love. Was any one ill? Let him come to his place. Has any one lost his sense? He found refuge in his monastery. Was anybody found difficult to treat with? Well, let him also come and live with him. Thus did his great love and patience prove a refuge to many who would otherwise have found their position difficult in the Order. Nor was this love a mere passive tolerance. It was silently active and positive in result. Many times his patience and love have been tried to their utmost limit, but never have they given way, but brought about, on the other hand, invisible changes in the recalcitrant minds. The secret was that along with loving patience, his behaviour with all was actuated by the consciousness of the inner Divinity of every man. The Divinity of man was a living experience with him and no imagination. His actions showed that he really felt that however disappointing his present aspects, every man contained in him germs of greatness and perfection. He could also therefore repose great confidence in others. This confidence inspired



trust and self-surrender in return and produced miraculous results. Nor would his trust in others be easily shaken. He would stand by one whom he had once given shelter and help him to the last. During the later part of the Swadeshi Movement, some young men, having come to feel that the Mission's ideals and methods were the best for the realisation of individual and national good, came to join the Order. Their previous political pre-occupations naturally gave rise to doubts as to the feasibility of their being admitted into the Order. Swami Saradananda however felt convinced of their sincerity and stood for them. They were taken in. But having once reposed confidence in them, he never cast the least suspicion on them and though they were sometimes the unintentional cause of worry to him, he never regretted his kindness. He had to submit, on one occasion at least, to great insult for their sake. But the Swami swallowed the "poison" with his habitual calmness. No matter in what straits, the monks, old and young, all found a steady refuge and help in him.

Many were the occasions when the Swami sat by the bedside of the sick members of the Math, patiently nursing them hour after hour, and his affectionate touch and sweet words lightened their suffering. Once when a servant of the monastery fell ill, he spent the whole night fanning and shampooing him. He had entered the room of the patient after dark so that he might not discover his identity and feel embarrassed. Oftentimes people have approached him with tales of woe, when he was himself perhaps suffering. Others tried to spare him these painful intrusions on his rest, but he was always for them. Once during a public festival at Belur, which the Swami attended though indisposed, a gentleman came weeping to him while he was resting to remove his extreme fatigue. He was asked by others to come to him another time. But the Swami remonstrated and said that the gentleman had come to him to relieve the agony of his heart and he must be given his opportunity. It was always thus with him. "Not I, but Thou, O Lord" and the Lord often came to the Swami in the guise of the suffering humanity.

During the last years he gave initiation (*Dikshā*) to many. Of course initiation with persons of high spiritual realisations like the Swami was not a formal affair. It is said when such a person gives initiation, he receives on himself the *Karmas* that bind the disciples and obstruct their spiritual progress. This vicarious suffering of disciples' karmas often causes physical illness to the Guru. Some therefore urged on the Swami to desist from giving initiation in consideration of his broken health. The Swami's reply was characteristic: "Do not say so. I consider myself blessed that people come to me to hear



the Lord's name. It is not they but I who have to be thankful for this. I am fortunate indeed that I have been given the privilege of telling them of the Lord." This was the inner man of Swami Saradananda, the loving servant of the Lord in men.

His humility never knew bounds. He was great in every respect, in spirituality, intellect and achievements. But it was an unconscious greatness. There was never a touch of superiority in his behaviour with others. Once a boy went to him for initiation. He asked him to wait till he grew older and said: "Why hurry? Wait, greater people will come afterwards." That was an absolutely sincere statement. For often he has been heard to remark, on being questioned about the means of self-control, that he was ill qualified to advise on self-control because he himself was lacking in it. It was no idle self-abasement. The consciousness of Perfection was so vivid in his mind that even little defects in himself appeared large in his eyes. Yet who that knew him did not feel that a man of more perfect self-control was scarcely to be seen? He was scarcely known to have shown anger. His steadiness and mental poise was marvellous. And once Swami Vivekananda having teased him variously and long is said to have declared that Sarat had got "the blood of fish" in his veins and could never be made angry.

He was extremely chary of receiving personal service from others. The Swami was very bulky in appearance and had been long a victim of rheumatism. Physical labour naturally proved hard to him in later years. But still, though himself always full of service for others, he scarcely accepted any personal service. During the last few years his health was completely broken; but even then he would wash his own clothes and carry his own water-pot. When he visited Benares last time, it was winter, and it was his habit to bathe early in the morning. The first two or three days he bathed in cold water. A disciple, fearing that cold bath would be detrimental to his health, secretly got up at four in the morning and prepared hot water for him. At first the Swami did not notice this. After two or three days, he happened to wake up at four and heard some one moving about downstairs gathering firewood. When he came to learn his intention, he sternly asked him to return to his bed. The Swami gave up early bath from the next morning.

He always considered himself equal with the youngest member of the Order and was perfectly just and democratic in his dealings. Whenever there were wants of servants in the Math, he would offer to share the menial and domestic works along with the younger members. He never judged any one



or anything without considering all sides. Any hasty judgment or decision was foreign to his nature. This of course stood him in good stead as the practical executive head of the Math and Mission. Every one was sure to get a hearing from him. He never listened to slanders. About this he himself observed that he was guided by the behest of Swami Vivekananda who had asked him to allow slanders to enter his one ear only to throw it out by the other. It has always seemed to us that the successful discharge of responsible executive duties in our Organisation is a most difficult task. The difficulty is scarcely apparent. But those who know the deep and strong forces that constitute the R. K. Math and Mission know full well that it is nothing short of the stupendous. First of all, the harmonisation of the spiritual and the temporal in the Mission is itself a task of supreme difficulty. The conflict between the call of the solitude of the soul and the turmoil of work is inherent in human nature. Secondly, the spiritual quest of the individual members and of the whole Order has to be maintained intact and in unflagging intensity ; and yet the whole energy has to be brought to bear on the solution of the growing and changing problems of the nation and humanity. Thirdly, the freedom, spiritual and otherwise, of the individual members must be maintained to the utmost degree. The peculiarities of individual natures are gifts of Heaven and must in no way be interfered with but allowed to grow to their unique perfection. And yet individual freedom must be made to harmonise with the purpose and function of the Organisation. To add to these, the individual centres of work also enjoy large measures of independence which should not be unnecessarily encroached upon. And above all, the workers are mostly monks with their tremendous love of freedom. If any one succeeds in guiding and controlling an organisation involving such principles and difficulties, he must certainly be a man of extraordinary abilities. Without extreme sincerity, impartiality of treatment, democratic outlook and above all, the clear vision of the spiritual in every man, little success is possible. There is no room here for mere tact or diplomacy. One must be sincere to the backbone and utterly innocent of any worldly outlook. The reason of the Swami's great success as the Secretary of the Mission is due to his having these qualities in large measures. It once happened that some branch centre resisted his decisions and refused to abide by them unless they were confirmed by the President. The Swami never felt the implied slight but cheerfully submitted to the proposal. We have heard of another occasion when having discovered an unintentional error committed in connection with a certain work, he wept bitter tears of regret. He once approached Swami Brahmananda, the then President, with the requests that he should be relieved of the



Secretaryship of the Order. When asked the reason of this strange request, he replied that a few days ago he had reprimanded a junior monk for having come away from Brindaban without previously writing to him and though the monk had said that he had written, he had not believed him ; but that he had that day discovered the letter mixed up with other papers. The Swami continued : "He was right, I scolded him without reason. I must send for him and beg his forgiveness." The President asked him not to go so far. But he could not find rest till he actually expressed his mistake to the monk and begged his forgiveness.

The story of his feeling heart can never be ended. The R. K. Mission usually tries very promptly to take the field whenever there is famine, flood, epidemic, etc., and its selfless and efficient relief-activities are well-known. Though Swami Saradananda could not personally go to the field of action, his heart would shed tears of blood at the suffering of the people. How earnest and piteous were the prayers that he then sent to the feet of the Lord, we could understand from the plaintive letters that he would then write to the Holy Mother whom he looked upon as the Divine Mother Herself. He would detail the sufferings of the people to her and beg her to bless them and alleviate their suffering. The Mother herself also could not refrain from shedding tears over those pathetic letters. His exterior scarcely betokened such a soft heart. He was apparently very stern and grave. But inside he was as soft as any woman, and there was no sorrow or suffering that did not wake up a sympathetic reverberation in his heart's chords.

Himself a great spiritual power, his respect for the President of the Order was great. On the morning of the last Bengali New Year's Day, he waited standing long for the President to finish his breakfast and then made respectful obeisance at his feet like any of the junior monks. This was evidently his homage to the Head of the Order. Such indeed was his spirit of submission to the discipline of the Organisation.

He was specially devoted to the Holy Mother whose name he enshrined in his monastic appellation. Mother also had the greatest confidence in his ability and devotion. She often remarked that Sarat alone was able to bear her responsibility. It is said that during her last illness, Mother once remarked : "I am tired of this life. I shall now depart taking Sarat in my arms and take him wherever I go." When this reached the ears of the Swami, he burst out crying like a child. The house popularly known as the Udbodhan-Office was bought for her and was called the Mother's House, and the Swami called and thought himself the gate-keeper of the Mother's House. To her his services were literally worshipful. How much he loved



and revered her was apparent even from the respectful and affectionate concern that he evinced for every one connected with her at her father's place or in the monasteries. It was his fond wish to chronicle the events of her life, but the passing of Swami Brahmananda took all zest out of his life. His last great act of homage to her memory was the installation of a temple in her birthplace at Jayrambati. The installation ceremony and the infinite kindness and generosity with which he blessed all who approached him then, will ever remain a cherished memory to all who attended the occasion.

We have already referred to the Swami's own admission that he had realised the presence of the Divine Mother in all women. That this was an abiding experience with him was manifest in his reverential attitude towards all women. There was something in that which clearly indicated that he saw in them a reality superior to what appears to mortal eyes. He was besides being a great Vedantist also a great Tantrika. His great reverence for womankind found another expression in the keen and active interest that he took in developing the Nivedita Girls' School. When the Holy Mother passed away, the large number of lady-devotees partly forgot the bereavement in the holy society of the Swami. The present age is struggling for a readjustment of the inter-relation of the sexes. The Swami's attitude is not without its moral in this connection.

The Swami's intellectual accomplishments were not of a mean order. He was possessed of deep scriptural scholarship and was an author of great repute. His intellectualism was at least partly responsible for his breadth of vision and high-mindedness. For he could because of that easily grasp others' standpoints and look at problems from the standpoints of the questioners. It was extremely pleasant and beneficial to discuss social, cultural, philosophical or religious problems with him. He could handle things so rationally! As in other respects, so also in intellectual matters, he was thoroughly impartial and never allowed his judgment to be biased. And often he would solve intricate problems with a few illuminating words to the complete satisfaction of the questioners. Besides a few English works and a Bengali booklet, he has left behind a masterly exposition of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna in five volumes, named *Sri Sri Ramakrishna-Lila-prasanga*, "Discourses on the Life of Sri Ramakrishna." It will stand for ever as a monument to his deep understanding of spiritual intricacies, sound judgment and mastery of a singularly forceful and precise style. This is certainly the greatest and the most authoritative work on Sri Ramakrishna. He did not leave the narrative completed. The passing of the Holy Mother and Swami Brahmananda seemed to paralyse his activity and he gradually



withdrew himself into meditative seclusion. When he was requested by Swami Suddhananda, the present Secretary of the Math and Mission, to complete his great book, he replied that he felt no inclination to write and was eager to lose himself in Divine contemplation and meditation.

And that indeed he actually did. As the days passed, he gave himself more and more to meditation. The mornings were almost wholly spent in spiritual practices, so also a great portion of the evenings. This was the fit conclusion of a life-long Karma-Yoga. For he was above all, an ideal Karma-Yogin. The special message that Swami Vivekananda delivered to the present age was that of Karma-Yoga. He wanted his monks to be a perfect harmony of Jnana, Bhakti, Yoga and Karma. This ideal was completely represented by Swami Saradananda, the brother-disciple whom the great Swami chose for the supreme task of organising his Order and actualising the details of his ideals. About Karma-Yoga, Swami Saradananda, being asked once to give his considered opinion regarding the relative values of the life of solitary meditation and that of Karma-Yoga, said : "Remove your doubt for ever, my boy, and remember what I say to-day. Those who will attain the summum bonum here will also attain it there, and those who will not attain it here will never attain it there." (By *here* and *there* the Swami meant work and seclusion). Steady, patient, unmoved by good or evil, unaffected by joy or sorrow, viewing all with the same eye, concentrating his whole soul on the Lord, and loving and seeing all beings as embodiments of the Divine—such was Swami Saradananda, the concrete form of the ideal that the members of the Ramakrishna Order ever hold before them, and no wonder that his loss has left a big gap in their heart.

His last great act was the calling of the first Convention of the R. K. Math and Mission, which was held in April, 1926. But it is a by-product of the Convention which was perhaps the most important of its results,—the appointment of a Working Committee for the control and conduct of the entire activities of the Organisation. This new step is bound to have a far-reaching effect ; and had it not been for the active and whole-hearted support of Swami Saradananda, it would not perhaps have materialised. This evidently was his last legacy to the Order. After that he did not take much active part in its operations. The call of the Undifferentiated Transcendental was sounding clearer and clearer in his ear. Even the little differentiation that Karma-Yoga or service in even the best and highest spirit necessarily implies, was proving too much for his fully manifested spirit. He became yet more meditative and at last the fateful 6th August arrived. He was sitting in his room at 8-30 p.m. prepared to come downstairs to meet the assembled devotees, when he suddenly felt faint, lay down on



his bed and gradually lapsed into unconsciousness. Doctors and Kavirajas were hastily called in ; they declared that it was a case of apoplexy. Since then till his passing away, though he regained partial consciousness now and then, he was never considered out of danger. Devotees flocked from all parts of India to have a last look at the beloved Swami. On Thursday, the 18th August, he got fever and his temperature rose to 105°. The doctors declared the case hopeless. Next day at 2 A. M. the attendants felt that the last moment was imminent, called on the devotees and chanted the holy name of Sri Ramakrishna. At 2-30 A. M. the immortal spirit left its mortal tenement and attained its pristine glory. At noon the remains were taken to the Belur Math and cremated there.

We have but very poorly succeeded in depicting the character of Swami Saradananda. He was immeasurably superior to any conception of our sadly imperfect mind. Of the men of God, we ordinary mortals can know but little ; much necessarily remains beyond comprehension. Yet the very little that we comprehended of him, how much beyond the average man it seems ! After about thirty years' hard toil, he has been called back to the side of his great Master. May His will be done ! The men of God are few and far between ; and when we succeed, through rare good luck, to come in contact with them, we seem verily to *sense* God in their life. To enjoy their company and have their love are literally the enjoyment of Divine communion and love. Therefore their departure from the world seems for the time being to deprive the soul of the ineffable bliss of Divine communion. Such an infliction indeed has been the passing of Swami Saradananda to many ; and their grief is too recent yet to be assuaged by any philosophical speculation. Those who have lived so long protected under the wings of his love, will now have to stand under the open sky and fight their lone battles. But life for them will not be without consolation. For the memory of his great love and life will always infuse new strength into their hearts and actuate them to deeper and deeper accessions to Truth. Having seen him, they have seen what true spirituality is ;—they have not to *imagine* it any more. They also have seen true manhood demonstrated before them. These are great gains. And perhaps even across the abyss of death they will sometimes get the living touch of his love. To the world outside, his life will ever remain a source of great inspiration for noble living and noble achievements. Future India will severely come to look upon him as one of its greatest spiritual teachers and as an ideal Karma-Yogin, a proto-type of what every Indian should be. Death has not ended his career among men, it has only begun it for yet coming ages.



# THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN MYSTICISM UPTO THE AGE OF JNANESVARA

By PROF. R. D. RANADE, M.A.

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[Prof. R. D. Ranade, a scholar of repute, is the director of the Academy of Philosophy and Religion, Poona. It was founded by him in June, 1924 and has enlisted the active sympathy of many scholars and patrons of learning all over India. Its objects are: Research in all philosophies and religions of the world; Publication of original philosophical and religious books; and Lectures in philosophy and religion at various centres in India. During the last three years the Academy has been fulfilling its functions to a certain measure and has already undertaken a very important work, the preparation of an Encyclopædic History of Indian Philosophy in 16 volumes, from the Vedic philosophy down to the modern movements, all to be written by scholars of recognised authority on the subjects. The Board of Editors contains such illustrious names as Sir B. N. Seal, Dr. Ganganath Jha, Prof. S. Radhakrishnan and Prof. S. N. Das Gupta. Two volumes have already been published, and another, "Mysticism in Maharashtra," by Prof. Ranade, is in the press. The following article is the first chapter of that book. It may be, our readers will find it difficult to fully agree with some of the opinions expressed in it, e.g., on the Upanishadic mysticism, Tantricism and Radha-Krishna cult. But it gives a beautiful panoramic view of the development of Indian mysticism.—Editor.]

## THE MYSTICISM OF THE UPANISHADS AND THE MYSTICISM OF THE MIDDLE AGE

In the previous volumes of our Encyclopædic History of Indian Philosophy, we have traced the development of Indian thought from its very dimmest beginnings in the times of the Rigveda downwards through the great philosophical conflicts of Theism, Pantheism and Qualified Pantheism to the twilight of the mysticism of the Middle Age, which being the practical side of philosophy can alone give satisfaction to those who care for philosophy as a way of life. The mystical vein of thought has been present throughout the development of Indian thought from the age of the Upanishads downwards. But it assumes an extraordinary importance only when we come to the second millennium of the Christian era which sees the birth of the practical spiritual philosophy taught by the mystics of the various Provinces of India. We have indeed seen that the culmination of Upanishadic philosophy was mystical. But the mysticism of the Upanishads was different from the mysti-



cism of the Middle Age inasmuch as it was merely the tidal wave of the philosophic imaginings of the ancient seers, while the other was the natural outcome of a heart full of piety and devotion, a consciousness of sin and misery, and finally a desire to assimilate itself practically to the Divine. The Upanishadic mysticism was a naive philosophical mysticism; the mysticism of the Middle Age was a practical devotional mysticism. The Upanishadic mysticism was not incompatible with queer fancies, strange imaginings, and daring theories about the nature of Reality: the mysticism of the Middle Age was a mysticism which hated all philosophical explanations or philosophical imaginings as useless, when contrasted with the practical appropriation of the Real. The Upanishadic mysticism was the mysticism of the sages who lived in cloisters far away from the bustle of humanity and who, if they permitted any company at all, permitted only the company of their disciples. The mysticism of the Middle Age was a mysticism which wholly engrossed itself in the practical upliftment of the human kind, based upon the sure foundation of one's own perfect spiritual development. The Upanishadic mystic did not come forward with the deliberate purpose of mixing with men in order to ameliorate their spiritual condition. The business of the mystic of the Middle Age consisted in mixing with the ordinary run of mankind, with sinners, with pariahs, with women, with people who cared not for the spiritual life, with people who had even mistaken notions about it, with, in fact, everybody who wanted, be it even so little, to appropriate the Real. In a word we may say that as we pass from the Upanishadic mysticism to the mysticism of the Middle Age, we see the spiritual life brought from the hidden cloister to the market-place.

#### THE MYSTICISM OF THE BHAGAVADGITA AND THE MYSTICISM OF THE MIDDLE AGE

Before, however, mysticism could be brought from being the private possession of the few to be the property of all, it must pass through the intermediate stage of the moral awakening of the people to a sense of duty, which would not be incompatible with philosophical imagination on the one hand and democratisation of mystical experience on the other, which task indeed was accomplished by the Bhagavadgita. As is well known, the Bhagavadgita laid stress on the doing of duty for duty's sake almost in the spirit of the Kantian categorical imperative. This is the central thread which strings together all the variegated teachings of the Bhagavadgita. The doctrine of Immortality which it teaches in the second chapter, the way of equanimous Yogic endeavour which it inculcates in the fifth, the hope which it holds out for sinners as well as saints, for women as well as men, in the ninth, the superiority



which it declares of the way of devotion to the way of mere knowledge in the twelfth, and finally the universal immanence and omnipotence of God which it proclaims in the last chapter, supply merely side-issues for the true principle of Moral Conduct which finds its justification in Mystic Realisation. The Bhagavadgita, however, had not yet bade good-bye to philosophical questionings; it had not yet ceased to take into account the philosophical issues raised by the previous systems of philosophy; it had not yet lost hope for reconciling all these philosophical issues in a supreme mystical endeavour. In these respects the mysticism of the Middle Age offers a contrast to the mysticism of the Bhagavadgita. Barring a few exceptions here and there, the entire tenor of the mysticism of the Middle Age is for the practical upliftment of humanity irrespective of any philosophical questionings, with probably a strong, if not even a slightly perverted, bias against philosophical endeavour to reach the Absolute. We may say in fact that as the mysticism of the Bhagavadgita rests upon a philosophical foundation, the mysticism of the Middle Age rests upon itself, invoking no aid from any philosophical construction whatsoever.

#### THE PERSONALITY OF KRISHNA

The personality of Krishna, which looms large behind the teachings of the Bhagavadgita, is indeed a personality which antiquarians and critics have sought in vain to construct from all the available evidence from the times of the Vedas to the times of the Puranas. While one view would hold that Krishna was merely a solar deity, another would regard him merely as a vegetation deity; a third would identify the Krishna of the Bhagavadgita with the Krishna of the Chhandogya Upanishad on the slender evidence of both being the sons of Devaki, unmindful of any difference between their teachings; a fourth would father upon Krishnaism the influence of Christian belief and practice. To add to these things, we have to note that these critics have been entirely blind to the fact, as Mr. Raychaudhuri has cleverly pointed out, that the Krishna, the famous prince of the Vrishni family of Mathura, was the same as Vasudeva, the founder of "Bhagavatism" which is also called the Satvata, or the Aikantika doctrine in the Santiparvan. Vasudevism was indeed no new religion, *pace* Dr. Bhandarkar, as has been contended sometimes. It was merely a new stress on certain old beliefs which had come down from the days of the Vedas. The spring of devotional endeavour which we see issuing out of the mountainous regions of the Vedas, being then directed primarily to the personality of Varuna, hides itself in the philosophical woodlands of the Upanishads, until in the days of the Bhagavadgita it issues out again, and appears to



vision in a clear fashion with only a new stress on the old way of beliefs. The mystical strain which is to be found in Upanishadic discussion is to be found even here in Vasudevism with a greater emphasis on devotion. That the Vasudeva doctrine and order existed in the times of Panini is now patent to everybody. The epigraphic evidence afforded by the Besanagar and Ghasundi inscriptions with even the mention of "Dama, Tyaga and Apramada"—virtues mentioned by the Bhagavan in the Bhagavadgita—lends a strong support to, and gives historical justification for, the existence of the Vasudeva religion some centuries previous to the Christian era, and the philosophic student would note that as in essence the religion of the Bhagavadgita does not differ from the religion of the Santiparvan, mysticism being the culmination of the teachings of both, it is the same personality of Krishna which appears likewise as the promulgator of the Bhagavata doctrine, even though at later times that doctrine fell into the hands of the mythologists, who, not having been able to understand its philosophical and mystical import, tried merely to give it an occult and ritualistic colouring.

#### VISHNU OCCULTISM: THE PANCHARATRA

This indeed did happen as the Pancharatra doctrine came to be formulated and developed. The doctrine has its roots so far back as at the times of the Mahabharata, though later on it came to be taught as a separate occult doctrine. We are concerned here, however, only with its later theological development, and not with its origin. We have to see how the Pancharatra was a system of occult Vishnu worship. The system derived its name from having contained five different disciplines, namely Ontology, Liberation, Devotion, Yoga, and Science. Its central Occult doctrine was that Divinity was to be looked upon as being fourfold, that Vishnu manifests himself in the four different forms of Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. These are called the four Vyuhās, that is to say, "disintegrations" of the one Divinity into four different aspects. Now the supreme Godhead was regarded as possessing six different powers, namely, Jnana, Aisvarya, Sakti, Bala, Virya and Tejas. These six qualities were to be "shoved off" into three different groups. The first and the fourth constitute the first group and belong to Sankarshana. The second and the fifth constitute the second group and belong to Pradyumna. The third and the sixth constitute the third group and belong to Aniruddha. In fact, it seems that the whole Pancharatra scheme was based upon the worship of the Vasudeva family: Sankarshana was Vasudeva's brother, Pradyumna his son, Aniruddha his grand-son. Each of these three Vyuhās, with its set of two qualities each, was identical



with Vasudeva in possession of all the six qualities. When, however, we remember that the last three qualities, namely Bala, Virya and Tejas are merely a reduplication of the third quality, namely Sakti, the sixfold scheme of qualities falls to the ground, and what remain is only the three primary qualities, namely Jnana, Aisvarya and Sakti. These three belong severally to Sankarshana, Aniruddha and Pradyumna, and collectively to Vasudeva himself. There is also a cosmological sense in which the three last Vyuhās are to be regarded as being related to the first, namely, Vasudeva. They are a series of emanations, one from another, like one lamp lit from another. From Vasudeva was born Sankarshana, from Sankarshana, Pradyumna, and from Pradyumna, Aniruddha. This is as much as to say, that from the Self was born the Prakriti, from the Prakriti, the Mind, and from Mind, Consciousness. Dr. Grierson has put the whole cosmological case of the Pancharatras in a lucid fashion: "Vasudeva first creates Prakriti and passes at the same time into the phase of conditioned spirit, Sankarshana. From the association of Sankarshana with the Prakriti, Manas is produced; at the same time Sankarshana passes into the phase of conditioned spirit known as Pradyumna. From the association of Pradyumna with the Manas springs the Samkhya Ahankara, and Pradyumna passes into a tertiary phase known as Aniruddha. From Ahankara and Aniruddha spring forth the Mahabhūtas." This was how the four Vyuhās came to be endowed with a cosmological significance. Vishnu, however, whose manifestations all the four Vyuhās are supposed to be, is endowed by the Pancharatra scheme with two more qualities, namely Nigraha and Anugraha, which, when paraphrased freely, might mean destruction and construction, disappearance and appearance, frown and favour, determinism and grace. The theistic importance of the Pancharatra comes in just here that it recognises the principles of "grace". The grace of the Divinity is compared to a shower of compassion which comes down from heaven: it droppeth as the gentle rain upon the place beneath. The Pancharatra rarely uses Advaitic language, and had it not been for the doctrine of the Antaryāmin, which, as Dr. Scharader has pointed out, is its point of contact with Pantheism, it would not have much in common with the Advaitic scheme. It does not support the illusionistic doctrine of the Advaita, and its Occultism is seen writ large upon its face in its disintegration of the one Divinity into four aspects, which acquire forthwith an equal claim upon the devotion of the worshipper.

#### SIVA OCCULTISM : TANTRISM

Correlative to the Vishnu Occultism of the Pancharatra, we have the Siva Occultism of Tantrism, the sources of which



likewise are to be traced as far back as the days of the Mahabharata. The Siva Occultism even surpasses Vishnu Occultism in point of irregularities of belief and practice, which must be regarded evidently as aberrations of mysticism. When we remember the distinction between Mysticism and Occultism, the one given entirely to God-devotion and God-realisation, and the other to mere incrustations on these, which inevitably gather round any good thing as time goes on, we shall not wonder at the great aberrations of practice which are illustrated in the development of Tantrism. Possessing an immense literature as it does, Tantrism abounds in discussions of Mantra, Yantra, and Nyasa which are only fortuitous, and therefore unnecessary elements in the true worship by means of the heart, which alone mysticism commends. . . . No doubt when Tantrism recognises Siva as the embodiment of Supreme Consciousness, and Sakti as the embodiment of Supreme Power, both being merely the aspects of that eternal Verity, the Brahman, it preaches a truth which is worth while commending in philosophy. Tantrism recognises itself to be the practical counterpart of Advaitism. In that respect even the great Sankaracharya may be regarded as a great Tantrist ; and Tantrism was supposed to be merely the Sadhana counterpart of the doctrine of Monism. It is not its philosophic standpoint which is worth while commenting on in Tantrism. It is rather its practical part, the part of Sadhana, which, if literally understood, was sure to engender grievous practices bordering upon immorality and vice. . . . In psychology, however, Tantrism did one good service in the development of Indian thought. It supposed that a man's mind was a vast magazine of powers, and as the universal Consciousness was supposed to be vehicled by the universal Power, so man's consciousness was supposed to be vehicled by the power in the form of mind and body. The unfoldment of such power was the work of Sadhana. A man in whom Sakti was awakened differed immensely from the man in whom it was sleeping, and the whole psychological process of the Tantric Sadhana lay in the awakening of the Kundalini. Tantrism did great service to the development of physiological knowledge when it recognised certain plexuses in the human body such as the Adharachakra, the Svadhishtanachakra, the Anahatachakra and so on, until one reached the Sahasrarachakra in the brain. But on the whole, it may not be far away from the truth to say that Tantrism drove true mysticism into occult channels, from which it was not easy to extricate it, and to set it on a right foundation.

#### THE BHAGAVATA AS A STOREHOUSE OF ANCIENT MYSTICISM

We have hitherto considered the occult movements, both Vaishnavite and Saivite, which spring from the days of the



Mahabharata to end in utterly sectarian systems, each of which tries to develop its dogma in its own particular way. We shall now consider the Mystic movement proper, for which our texts are the Bhagavata, the Narada Bhakti Sutra and the Sandilya Bhakti Sutra. These three works represent the Mystic development of thought which probably runs side by side with the Occult movement on the one hand which we have already considered, and the Philosophic movement which we shall consider a little further on. That the Bhagavata influenced systems of philosophical thought like those of Ramanuja and Madhva, that it had by that time earned sufficient confidence from the people to be used as a text-book, that it is the repository of the accounts of the greatest mystics from very ancient times, that, though some of its language may be modern, it contains archaisms of expression and diction which may take it back to the early centuries of the Christian era—all these facts make it impossible that the Bhagavata should have been written, as is sometimes contended, about the 12th century A.D., pointing out unmistakably that it must have been written earlier, *pari passu* with the development of early philosophical systems, so as ultimately, in course of time, to be able to influence later formulations of thought. The Bhagavata, as we have pointed out, is a repository of the accounts of the Ancient Mystics of India, and if we may seek for some types of mystics in the Bhagavata, we may find a number of such types, which later on influenced the whole course of the Mystic movement. Dhruva, in the first place, is a child-prince who leaves his kingdom and the world when he is insulted by his step-mother and who, in the agonies of his insult, seeks the forest where he meets the spiritual teacher who imparts to him the knowledge of the way to God, and who ultimately succeeds in realising His vision (IV. 8). Prahlada, the son of the Demon-King, whose love to God stands unvanquished in the midst of difficulties, whose very alphabets are the alphabets of devotion, who escapes the dangers of the fire and the mountain when his earnestness about God is put to the test, supplies another example of a pure and disinterested love to God, so that he is able to say to God when he sees Him—"I am Thy disinterested Devotee. Thou art my disinterested Master. But if Thou wishest to give me any boon at all, bestow upon me this boon, that no desire should ever spring up within me" (VII. 10). Uddhava is the friend of God, whose love to Him stands the test of time, and of philosophical argument (X. 46). Kubja, the crooked concubine, who conceived apparently a sexual love towards Krishna, had her own sexuality transformed into pure love, which made her ultimately the Beloved of the Divine (X. 42). Even the Elephant who lifted up his trunk to God when he found his foot caught hold of by the great Alligator in the sea, supplies



us with another illustration as to how even animals might be lifted up by devotion, and as to how God might come even to their succour in the midst of their afflictions (VIII. 2-3). Sudaman, the poor devotee, who has no other present to offer to God except a handful of parched rice, is ultimately rewarded by God who makes him the lord of the City of Gold (X. 80-81). Ajamila, the perfect sinner, who is merged in sexuality towards a pariah woman, gets liberation merely by uttering the Name of God at the time of his death (VI. 1-2). The sage Ajagara, who lives a life of idle contentment and of unconscious service to others, has derived his virtues from a Serpent and a Bee whom he regards as his spiritual teachers (VII. 13). Rishabhadeva, whose interesting account we meet with in the Bhagavata, is yet a mystic of a different kind, whose utter carelessness of his body is the supreme mark of his God-realisation. We read how, having entrusted to his son Bharata the kingdom of the Earth, he determined to lead a life of holy isolation from the world; how he began to live like a blind or a deaf or a dumb man; how he inhabited alike towns and villages, mines and gardens, mountains and forests; how he never minded however much he was insulted by people, who threw stones and dung at him, or subjected him to all sorts of humiliation; how in spite of all these things his shining face and his strong-built body, his powerful hands and the smile on his lips, attracted even the women in the royal harems; . . . . . how he was in sure possession of all the grades of happiness mentioned in the Upanishads, how ultimately he decided to throw over his body; how, when he had first let off his subtle body go out of his physical body, he went travelling through the Karnatak and other provinces, where, while he was wandering like a lunatic, naked and lone, he was caught in the midst of a great fire kindled by the friction of bamboo trees; and how finally he offered his body in that fire as a holocaust to God (V. 5-6). Avadhuta is yet a mystic of a different type who learns from his twenty-four Gurus different kinds of virtues such as Forbearance from the Earth, Luminosity from the Fire, Unfathomableness from the Ocean, Seclusion from a Forest, and so on, until he ultimately synthesises all these different virtues in his own unique life (XI. 7). Suka, in whose mouth the philosophico-mystical doctrines of the Bhagavata are put, is the type of a great mystic who practises the philosophy that he teaches, whose mystical utterances go to constitute the whole of the Bhagavata, and who sums up his teaching briefly in the 87th chapter of the Xth Skandha of the Bhagavata, where he points out the necessity of a Spiritual Teacher, of Devotion, and of the Company of the Good for a truly mystical life. Finally, Krishna himself, who is the hero of the Xth and the XIth Skandhas of the Bhagavata, who, on account of his great spiritual powers,



might be regarded as verily an incarnation of God, whose relation to the Gopis has been entirely misrepresented and misunderstood, whose teachings in essence do not differ from those advanced in the Bhagavadgita, who did not spare his own family when arrogance had seized it, who lived a life of action based upon the highest philosophical teaching, and who, when the time of his departure from earthly existence had come, offered himself to be shot by a hunter with an arrow, thus making a pretext for passing out of mortal existence, supplies us with the greatest illustration of a mystic who is at the top of all the other mystics mentioned in the Bhagavata Purana.

(To be continued)

## **MOMENTS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA IN AMERICA**

By SWAMI ATULANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

He never hesitated to correct our shortcomings in a bold, straightforward way, for which we, in the West, were hardly prepared.

Some of the students took exception at the unceremonious method in which the Swami rebuked them. They were greatly annoyed and offended when he laid bare their weak spots in the presence of others, or even in private. Then he would say, "You people in the West always try to cover up and hide your mistakes. But how can the wound be treated unless the bandages are removed? You hide your real character behind a smooth and polite exterior, but the sore festers in the heart. The Guru is the physician, and once the disease is diagnosed he must not fear to apply the lancet if necessary. Sometimes a deep, clear incision is the only remedy. You are so sensitive, always afraid of being scolded or exposed. When I flatter a little, you say, 'Swami is so wonderful,' but when I utter a harsh word you run away."

Another difficulty the Swami had to meet was that some students thought that he did not understand them.

To this he would reply, "I know you better than you know yourself, because I can look deep into your mind. What is hidden to yourself, is revealed to me. In time you will realize that what I tell you is true."

We could not understand it then, but later, when hidden tendencies came to the front, we discovered that the Swami was right.



A young student once confessed this to him, and then the Swami gave the explanation.

"You see," he said, "ordinarily we know only the surface waves of our mind. But through Yoga practice we learn to go deeper. By watching and studying our own minds we dive below the surface consciousness, and observe what is going on there. Many Samskaras—latent desires and tendencies—are stored up there, waiting for an opportunity to express themselves. These we can discover before they rise to the surface. This is very important, for once a thought has come to the surface it is extremely difficult to control. But at an early stage, before it has fully developed and gathered strength, it is easy to manipulate. This is called, 'Seeing our thoughts in seed form.'

"The seed is easily destroyed, but when it has germinated and grown into a big, strong tree, it requires great strength and effort to hew it down. So we must crush our desires in their early, undeveloped stages. Yogis can do this. They keep down undesirable thoughts in the germ state by smothering them beneath thoughts of an opposite nature. Thus they conquer all evil tendencies, hatred with love, anger with kindness, and so on."

Once in New York, after a morning lecture, the Swami called me aside, and asked me to go with him for a walk. It was a lovely, sunny day. We took lunch together in a restaurant, and then walked to Central Park. There we sat down in a solitary place on the grass beneath a tree. The Swami had spoken little. He was in a serious mood, and seemed a little sad, I knew there was something on his mind that he wanted to unburden, but I did not feel inclined to approach the subject. However, at last he began.

"You see," he said, "I tell you everything because I cannot keep my thoughts hidden. Some of the students think that I don't understand them. That is because they don't understand themselves. They don't know the hidden motives that prompt them to action. They feel the impulse to do certain things, and that impulse they interpret to suit their own convenience. The real desire that pushes them on, they don't see. I can see these hidden springs, but when I tell the students this, they get annoyed, and say, 'Swami doesn't understand.' Everybody in this country thinks that he is unselfish, whereas unselfishness is extremely rare. We are deluded by our ego. Therefore, Hindu scriptures say that a Guru is necessary. He can probe the mind of the disciple, see his real motives, and warn him in time. But Western people don't understand this. They won't admit the need of a Guru. The West is very egoistic."



When we got up and walked home, the Swami said, "My Master was a perfect Yogi, nothing remained hidden from him. He knew our minds through and through. We didn't have to ask him anything, he anticipated all our thoughts. We never had the impression that he was teaching us, but he watched us all the time. Nothing escaped him. He knew what pitfalls stood in our way, and he made us avoid them."

"Have you ever seen people play chess? The players sometimes overlook a move because their minds are set on winning the game. But the looker-on will see the move, because his mind is calm, not disturbed by the desire to win. We become ambitious, and thus lose clearness of vision. Ambition sweeps us along, and all prudence is thrown to the winds. Our desires make us blind."

When I saw in the letter which I have quoted before about the Swami scolding his nurses, I was reminded of what another friend of mine once told me. She also had freely given her skill and time to wait on him through a serious illness.

"The Swami," she told me, "was what we call a difficult patient. He insisted on having his own way. He was almost like a child, fretful, and complaining about little things. I could not understand it. I expected a Sannyasin to be above all weaknesses, stoical under all conditions, suffering silently, as we all try to do. Instead of that he showed his temper at the least provocation, and sometimes seemed even unreasonable."

"One morning, when I came to release the night nurse, I found him peevish after a restless night. Almost the first words he greeted me with were a scolding. 'You Western nurses don't know anything. Any Hindu knows more about nursing than you do. Our grandmothers are better doctors than all your M. D's.'"

"Of course, I knew he did not mean it. But, you know, we, trained nurses, are very touchy when our profession is assailed. So I was really annoyed, and rather sharply remarked, 'I don't know anything about your grandmother, but our men are braver under suffering than you are.'"

"'Yes,' the Swami retorted, 'you all want to show off, but I don't care for your praise or blame. If you don't like me you may go. I don't need any nurse. I could cure myself this moment, if I wanted to. I am a better Christian scientist than you people are. Go, and carry your pride elsewhere, where you will get praise. I can do nothing with you. All you want is a little surface polish and praise. I am not going to be a hypocrite to please you. Even a patient in this country is not allowed to be natural. He must consider the nurse, what will *she* think?'"

"I loved the Swami and regretted to have given way to



impatience. Tears came to my eyes. When the Swami saw this, his attitude suddenly changed, and he said, very gently, 'Don't you know, this is our way of doing in India? We scold those whom we love. When we feel indifferent toward a person, we never scold him. But those whom we love we try to correct. What do I care whether I am sick or well? I have come to this country to help you, not for my own benefit.' "

This little episode must be rather surprising to those who have witnessed the remarkable power of *titiksha* (patient endurance) shown by the Swami during the years of his last and very painful illness. He has shown in that one side of his nature, in the West he showed another side and if we believe that the Swami was one of those souls already free, reborn on earth to do his share in his Master's work, we cannot but believe that behind this all was a great purpose.

Perhaps my friend's own confession throws light upon the subject. For there is a sequel to this story. She admitted that patient and even heroic suffering in the West is so common than in the Swami's case it would not have attracted her special attention. But when during the rest of his illness, after this little incident, she found the Swami kindness and patience itself, she recognized his power of manipulating his own mind. Henceforth he was as manageable as an obedient child, without a complaint. He spoke of the Divine Mother as a power greater than the power of man. He was Her child, accepting without complaint whatever She meted out to him. "Let Mother's will be done," was constantly on his lips. My friend's professional pride was toned down. She began to realize that after all, man is but an instrument in the Mother's hands. She became one of the Swami's most devoted disciples.

I have often been present when the Swami came to the kitchen and told stories while the mistress of the home prepared the food. One of these stories I remember was about a lion who had been caught and tied down with ropes. A little mouse came and began to gnaw the ropes one by one, till the lion was free. "Thus," the Swami concluded, "the mind must cut one by one the bondages of the world, till the soul is liberated."

His answers to questions after the lectures, were often short, but always to the point and illuminating. Thus we had our doubts settled, sometimes doubts of long standing, that had puzzled us a great deal. The Swami was very fond of the saint Tulsidas, and in answering questions often quoted his sayings.

Once, in San Francisco, when a student asked him why there is so much evil in the world, the Swami replied, "Tulsidas says, 'To the good the world is full of good, but to the bad



the world is full of evil.' The world is neither good nor bad. What I call good, you perhaps call bad, and the reverse. Where is the standard? The standard is in our own attitude towards life. Each one has his own standard. And with increased experience and insight, the standard changes. The pity is that we still recognize evil. When we become perfectly good ourselves, the whole world will appear good. We see only the reflection of our own minds. See the Lord always in everything, and you will see no evil."

When asked to explain this more fully, he said, "A suspicious mind sees evil everywhere; a trusting mind sees only good. Have you ever seen a jealous woman? She is always suspicious. Her husband may be a good man, but no matter what he says or does, the woman will find something to justify her jealousy. A quarrelsome person constantly finds something to quarrel about; a peaceful person finds no one to quarrel with. I find so many people here with fixed notions. They have one set idea that colors everything. They cannot get away from it. Everything is explained according to that one idea.

"Some persons always want to argue. They often have little brain, cannot see a point, still they must argue. Then there are over-sensitive persons. They are always on the defensive. Whatever general statement you may make, they take as being directed towards them, to attack them. All these are causes for evil. But the evil is not in the world, it is in the persons. It is all a matter of misunderstanding. If we understood each other better there would be less evil.

"But who wants to understand? Every one is shut up within his own ego. From that prison we judge the world. The remedy is to see the Lord in all. 'He who sees Me in all, and all in Me,' Sri Krishna says, 'he finds peace.' See the Lord, and you will see good everywhere."

In the Shanti Ashrama the Swami repeatedly warned us against idle talk. "You always like to gossip," he said. "Useless talk brings much trouble. You begin to discuss others, and go on at a great rate talking foolishness. Why do you criticize others? Look at your own faults, and be silent. A Hindu saint has said, 'Let your lips only utter the name of the Lord, let your ears only hear the words of scripture and wise men, let your eyes see only God's greatness in His creation.'

"That is why I sometimes ask you to observe silence, and to live alone, in retreat. Silence is called *mauna* in Sanskrit. It means not only abstaining from speech, but indrawing of all the senses, looking inward, centring the mind on Atman. The mind is always curious, always reaches out for 'news.' I see, whenever it is mail day, you run for your letters, and for the following twenty-four hours, though your body is here, your



mind is in San Francisco. Give up being curious about non-sensical things, be curious about Mother, and how to know and love Her. Make the best of your time. Life is short, don't waste your energy in useless pursuits. 'Know the Atman alone, and give up all other talk.' "

The Swami's instructions were not reserved for special occasions. His religion was not a Sunday or special-day religion. He *was* what he taught. His talks came in torrents, ever new flows, fresh currents from an inexhaustible spring. There was no set time ; we never knew when a new supply would be released. We therefore wanted to be with him at all times, that we might not miss a single outpour from that hidden source deep down in his own heart. For in him dwelled the Divine Mother, using his lips to teach, to call, Her children.

Yes, it is true what my friend writes, the Swami used to call us Mother's children. And how sweet, how encouraging did these words sound in our ears !

## GOD, SOUL AND MATTER

BY SWAMI SHARVANANDA

(Concluded from the last issue)

### GOD

Religion begins with the personal conception of God who is considered to be endowed with supreme attributes and excellences and infinite powers. He is looked upon as the creator, preserver and ruler of the universe and on his mercy the entire creation depends. He has a distinct personality. He resides in some extra-cosmic region from where he manipulates the infinite forces of the universe. This personal conception is natural with man. The very limitations of man compel him to look up to some being who would help him to transcend those limitations to realise a better state of being for which his whole soul yearns. And the thought of that great helper as infinite and perfect in every respect is a deep psychological necessity with him. Man however does not seem to feel the incongruity of combining these aspects simultaneously in God. That a God who is infinite and perfect cannot also at the same time be a person, a ruler or helper, does not seem to strike him. Anyhow this personal ideal of God is in all revealed religions the motive power and spring of all noble sentiments and inspirer of superior and holy life.

Along with the consciousness of limited existence, an intense pessimism also marks the beginning of religion. Pessimism takes a gloomy view of life. The world seems a vale of



tears and religion is considered to brighten life with the light of hope and glory, promising to take man beyond to a state where reigns perfect freedom from the present harrassing limitations. This state of perfection and emancipation through the grace of God is called heaven. The hope of heaven is a strong incentive to the ordinary mind in taking to the worship of God.

But when the mind is chastened and ethically purified and spiritually uplifted by worship which is nothing but a psychological approach to the Divine Ideal, it is able to perceive subtler aspects of life and existence. It feels that a being who is personal, that is to say, of a limited existence implied in personality, can never be infinite and perfect in the true sense. Individuality or personality always carries with it the consciousness of a distinction which is inherent in all conditioned existence, in objects limited by time, space and causation. A limited thing can never be truly perfect or infinite. True infinity is always transcendental. It is unconditioned by time, space and causation. Therefore to look upon God as infinite, perfect, omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent and also a personal being, is a manifest self-contradiction. To be truly infinite, omniscient, omnipresent, etc., the Divine Principle must be all-pervasive, immanent, and therefore impersonal. Nay, even the immanent view of God does not truly represent his perfection and infinity. An immanent and all-pervasive principle can be infinite only mathematically. But it is mutable and conditioned even as infinite matter is conditioned being converted to various modes by time, space and causality. But of course both the material and spiritual principles cannot be mutable, for then they would require a third principle which must be immutable, because no mutation is conceivable without an immutable something as its background, which must be imagined to be superior even to the spiritual principle. But there is nothing beyond spirit. Strict logic therefore points that the spiritual principle or the Divine Principle must be transcendental and metaphysically infinite to be truly perfect and the permanent basis of existence and life.

That is why we notice that the philosophies of the different religions of the world have generally taken three views of the Divine Principle, namely, God the personal, God the immanent impersonal and God the absolute. This three-fold view of God is also found corroborated by the practical religion, by the actual experiences of religious mystics in different parts of the world. Some mystics experience God as an actual Divine person, responding to their prayer, succouring their needs and receiving the devout homage of their heart. They are even vouchsafed the vision of the personal forms of the Divine. These mystics are not frauds. For we find them



leading lives of utmost moral purity and saintliness such as are scarcely found among ordinary men. Nor are they deluded fools. For their clarity of vision and keen understanding of things and affairs and highly developed intellectual powers can hold comparison very favourably with the best of the so-called intelligent. We must therefore give credence to their evidence and cannot dogmatically set aside their experiences as mental aberrations.

It has been truly said: "Though he is of the nature of pure intelligence, one without a second, without parts and bodiless, yet for the sake of the devotees, Brahman assumes forms." The concretisation of the impersonal Brahman into personal forms is not a subjective aberration of the devotee, but an actual objective fact. It may be too subtle to be apprehended by the ordinary mind, yet it is as much a fact as any concrete object of the world. As external objects are subjective, being the visions of individuals imposed upon the formless material principle, but also objective (and not *products* of individual minds) being perceived similarly and simultaneously by all, even so the personal forms of God, though mental visions, are not yet the outcome of any individual mind, but of the cosmic mind, and are therefore as much a fact and reality as any other object of the universe.

We next notice another group of religious mystics who rise to a still higher experience where the Divine Principle is experienced as the immanent being imbuing everything, every atom, every pulsation of life. Nothing exists which is not an expression of that being. He is the soul of all souls. He is essentially of the nature of intelligence, bliss and energy and is the substance and eternal basis of all phenomena.

There is still another class of mystics whose spiritual experiences transcend even immanence. Contemplating their beloved deity, they reach a state of consciousness where the human soul rends the their rind of individuality, of time, space and causation, of all limitations, and loses itself in the ecstasy of a being that is at once transcendental, infinite and indescribable. Nothing can be posited of that experience except that it is the consciousness of pure existence, unfettered intelligence and causeless bliss. It is this which has been described by the Vedic sages as the experience of *Satchidananda* (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). In that experience, thought dies and the mind expires and nothing remains except the principle of contentless consciousness shining in its own infinite glory. This is the highest knowledge of God.

Thus our study of matter, soul and God has led us gradually from diversity to unity. We began with external objects. But as we proceeded with our analysis and discovery of underlying principles, we found the multiplicity of existence



melt away like mists before the rising sun. What seemed in the beginning unconnected varieties appeared later on as plural expressions of one fundamental unity. Proceeding further, we found the visions of even such plurality disappear. The distinctions of things became naught. And we reached at the Absolute Principle where do not exist time, space or causation—the real causes of the variegated universe. The highest synthesis is therefore that fundamental principle which is not and cannot be known by the mind, but which is much more than known being the very pivot of our existence and the basis of the knowing mind and all knowable objects. It can neither be known nor unknown. We can only say that it is and nothing else. That being, seen through time, space and causation, gives rise first to the vision of plurality interpenetrated by unity. It next develops into the twin vision of matter the perceived, soul the perceiver and God the presiding power over both. The Absolute is the substance and basis of God, soul and matter. It is behind them all as their common background like a screen on which the moving images of phenomena are being reflected. So long as matter is the object, there must be the perceiver of that object, which is the soul; and so long as the duality of soul and matter exists, there must be a being who governs and inter-relates them; and that is God.

Be it noted that these visions of God (personal), soul and matter are relative and not absolute. Matter is not unreal as the idealists would maintain, nor are soul and God unreal as atheists and materialists would have them. Yet these have but relative values, being as they are related to our evanescent experiences. On the sense-plane our experience is that of unmitigated plurality. Here all objects appear distinct and separate from one another. But as we go higher and see things from the thought-plane, our experience is that of unity in variety. But when we transcend even the thought-plane and reach a state where there is neither time nor space nor causation, our experience is of an indescribable reality which can only be imagined or inferred as pure unity. As our experiences are gathered from these three distinct planes and we see things from these three angles of vision, so reality also must be of three distinct kinds. Thus God, matter and soul are different and distinct in the sense-plane. They are inter-related, as unity in variety, in the mental plane. But they are dissolved into one undifferentiated existence in the spiritual plane. And that is the absolute value inasmuch as that is a state unconditioned and unaffected by time, space and causation. There is only a question of values—relative and absolute. The quarrel is not about what exists and does not exist. The world is, soul is and the personal God is, but only relatively. But all these disappear in the view of the Transcendental which alone has the absolute value.



This in short is the view of matter, soul and God, as seen through science, philosophy and religion ; and to our mind they are not at all contradictory to one another, but stand graded in the scale of values.

## SEEING INDIA WITH OTHER EYES

A LECTURE BY SISTER NIVEDITA

Delivered in London, October, 1900

Have any of us thought how much our work has gained from being done in a place where we were thoroughly at home?

Do we know what it is to escape from the hour, or the day, or the week, of patient toil to the edge of some lake or the heart of some wood? Have we stood and listened to the wind amongst the winter branches, or rustling the dead leaves, calling and calling to us with the voices of our childhood, stirring dim depths in us, lifting us to the innermost heights of our own being, filling us with an infinite love, and infinite courage, an immeasurable hope?

Have we ever realised how intimate is the connection between the great interests of our life—whatever they be, house-keeping, teaching, collecting wild flowers, deep intellectual research,—and the love of our country?—the feeling of being at home, amongst our own people? No matter whether our life be comedy or tragedy—always our own. I remember last Good Friday standing in a church in the extreme West, listening to the Reproaches. The day was cold and dark, and the words fell like sobs. "My people, My people, what have I done unto Thee? Wherein have I wearied thee?" In that supreme pathos it was "My people," there was no breaking of the bond.

I would say that there is no possibility of true work, no shadow of a possibility of a great life, where there is not this sense of union, with the place and the people amongst whom we find ourselves. If you answer that the great majority of men at least, in England to-day, are working at tasks which they hate and despise, I can only say that there is no surer sign of the fatal danger which assails our national life, and if you will give me the opportunity I think I shall easily make good that statement.

But all this does not mean that we must stay in the place where we were born. What happens when the call comes to the individual, to leave the old group and go out and found a new family or a new house? The indispensable condition of adding harmonious natures, well-developed and proportioned individuals, to the world, is that two people shall conceive



such an affection for each other that it cancels all difference of association. The time when they had not met must seem a blank to them, or only significant because that meeting throws light upon it. Probably both see qualities in the other that none else can see in either. That matters nothing. It may be all illusion. Only, the illusion must be there. And in some extraordinary way we find that if it is not there, and if it is not perfect, we can read the fact that, of two people, one was bondsman to the other, and not the free and joyous comrade, not only in their lives to-day, and in a home that misses the note of perfect joy, but long long hence, in the character of some old man or woman whose nature has always carried an inheritance of war within itself.

If this emotion is so necessary in order to preserve the unity of life through the alliance of a bride and bridegroom who were born in the same street, if its absence be fraught with such danger to more than the two people themselves, let us think how much more imperative it must be to the man who is called from England to India to do his work.

What a little thing it would be to any of us to die for one whom we really loved! Perhaps indeed we do not really love, to our deepest, till we have learnt that to be called to do so would be supreme beatitude. It is such love as this that makes it possible to live and do great service. It is such a falling-in-love that India demands of English men and women who go to her to work. It matters little what the conscious explanation may be,—a civil service appointment, a place in the army, the cause of religion, of education, of the people. Call it what we may, if we go with contempt, with hatred, with rebellion, we become degraded, as well as ridiculous; if we go with love, with the love that greets the brown of a cottage-roof against the sky, the curve of a palm, the sight of a cooking-pot, the tinkle of an anklet with a thrill of recognition, that desires the good of India as we desire the good of our own children, to transcend our own, that India be stimulated into self-activity by us, if we go with this love, then we build up the English Empire by sure ways, and along main lines, whether we imagine ourselves to be serving England or India or Humanity. For the love of England and India are one, but no love ever seeks its own.

Throughout what I say to-night I am speaking in the interests of England, as an English woman; more, what I say would be endorsed by all those highest officials who are faithful to the trust of their country's interest committed to them.

For the man who regards the Queen's cause is he who will impoverish himself to distribute bread in time of famine, and the man who hates and despises is the man who will selfishly exploit a subject people. I believe I am right in



saying that the supreme government is well aware that under the name of race-prestige much may be included which does anything but add to the prestige of our race.

The fact is, under the terrible over-organisation and over-centralisation of modern life, there lurks an appalling danger of vulgarity. We are succumbing to a horrible scepticism. How are mothers who have never seen the inside of anything but beautiful English homes, or luxurious travelling-resorts, how are these to know that there was no noble possibility before the knight-errant of old that is not doubled and trebled for their own boys? How are they to guess that the English race has to struggle with problems of doing and undoing to-day, that no race has ever faced in the history of the world? How can they lay upon their sons that charge of reverence and love and belief in the spiritual possibilities of life, that is necessary to make the name of our country stand in history as Shakespere dreamt of it.....

This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,  
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,  
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,  
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry  
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son,  
This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,  
Dear for her reputation through the world.....

And yet, though we know it not, the voices of the gods are all about the world to-day. The calls to self-sacrifice are greater, the ways of self-sacrifice are a thousandfold more, and many thousandfold deeper, than ever before. We are mistaken when we think that the clarion of war is the only sound that calls us to the right of struggling and dying for our country. The churchbells of the British peace ring a far surer summons. There was no greatness, no courage, no divine self-effacement, open to our fathers, of which infinitely more is not the right of their sons to-day. The words "British Empire" mean neither more nor less than the British opportunity to choose the noblest part ever played in the great drama of the world, or refusing, to fail utterly, and miserably, and brutally, as no nation ever failed before.

It has been a long preamble, and I am anxious to do justice to the difficulties that may present themselves to an untrained boy, sincerely desirous of doing the right thing, landing in India, to fulfil the duties of an appointment, without either a store of culture, or a disciplined imagination, or a wealth of rightly directed feeling.

I quite see how impossible it will look to him that people who live with a startling simplicity, who sit on bare floors,



and use in eating neither knives nor forks nor table-linen, are really persons of a deeper and more developed civilisation than his own.

The same difficulty, begin to say the scholars, faced the officers of Marcus Aurelius when they battled, on the frontiers of the Empire, against the merchant-peoples of the North.

It is no credit of mine that I have been so fortunate as to escape this difficulty. I went out to India nearly three years ago, and was there some eighteen months. I went at the call of an English woman, who felt that no sufficiently national attempt had yet been made, for the education of Indian girls. After spending sometime with her, I was to be free to take my own way of studying my problem. When I tell you what were my preconceptions of how I was to do this, I fear you will be much amused. I was not going for the sake of "the Higher" or literary, but for what we here have always called the *new* Education, beginning with the manual and practical aspects of development, and passing on to the question of definite technical and scientific training, but always regarded as subordinate to the development of character. I knew that one must live with the people, and take their point of view, if one were ever to establish any sound educational process amongst them, using to the utmost the elements that their life might provide, and keeping the scheme in organic relation with these.

This study I pictured to myself as taking place in mud huts, on journeys barefooted across the country, amongst people who would be completely hostile to my research. But I owed a great intellectual debt to Sanskrit culture and an educational task was a delightful means for the expression of my gratitude.

So you see that I was indeed more fortunate than most, in the attitude and means of my entrance into Indian life.

What did I find there?

Instead of hostility, I found a warmth of welcome.

Instead of suspicion, friends.

Instead of hardships and fatigue, a charming home, and abundance of the finest associations.

For eight months I lived alone with one servant in a real Indian house in a Calcutta lane. There I kept a small experimental school. About forty little girls belonged to it and I took them in relays—four classes of two hours each. My knowledge of Bengali being limited, I was particularly glad to fall back on kindergarten occupations for the greater part of our class-work, and I was thus enabled to arrive at a clear knowledge of the practical difficulties and practical potentialities of a useful school.

But this was work. The playtime of the day I was allowed to spend in a neighbouring zenana, amongst a group of widow ladies with whom I had much in common, and Saturday and



Sunday I reserved as holidays. This was a custom that I fear my children never approved. I remember how the first Saturday morning a crowd of uproarious little people had gathered outside the door at 6 o'clock, evidently determined to gain admission. A workman who could speak a little English was inside and he came to me, "The baby people, the baby people, Miss Sahib! Let me open!"

No Hindu of any class or sect or party ever put a hindrance in my way. When they heard of any difficulty, they always did something towards removing it, the women just as much as the men. In the same way, they felt a curious sense of responsibility, as if I were the guest of the whole of our lane. They were constantly sending me food. If they had fruit, they would share it with me. If I expected guests, they would provide the repast, and I rarely knew even the name of the giver.

I need not tell you that in deeds like these a very sweet relationship is created. I need not tell you that I am proud as well as grateful to have eaten the bread of a charity so sweet.

And I think if we go deeper into the reason of this hospitality, we shall be struck by the culture that it displays. *They thought of me as a student.* It was something like the university of the middle ages, where the poor scholar naturally came upon the good-wives of the town for maintenance. But there was I think this difference, that the university established such a custom mainly in a given centre here and there, while in India the idea of this function is familiar to every person and every family and the obligations of the university arise wherever there is one enquiring mind. Through and through the life I found these evidences of an ancient culture permeating every section of society, my only difficulty in recounting it all to you is in determining where to begin.

The pleasures of the people are such fine pleasures! It was my custom to save money by avoiding the use of cabs, and travelling in trams as much as possible. This, of course, always left a certain amount of a local journey to be made on foot. So at all hours of the day and night I would come up and down our narrow little lanes and streets, as various errands might lead me. In the sunlight they would be crowded with people, and the traffic of the bullock-carts. In the evening, men would be seated chatting about their doorways or in the shops, or inside open windows, and no one even looked my way; but at night, when one had once turned out of the European streets, everything was sunk in stillness and peace, so that it took me some time on the journey home to recover from the shock of seeing a drunken Englishman. In eight months of living in the poorest quarter of Hindu Calcutta, such a sight had been impossible. As one lay in bed however, the chanting of prayers would occasionally break the silence



of the midnight, and one knew that somewhere in the distant streets a night beggar, lamp in hand, was going his rounds.

I think if one must pick out some feature of Indian life which more than any other compels this high morality and decorum to grow and spread, it must be the study of the national epics. There are two great poems, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, which take a place to Hindus something like that of Shakespeare to ourselves. Only this is a Shakespeare that every one knows, and a Shakespeare with the sacredness of the New Testament thrown about it.

A picture comes to me of a night-scene in the Himalayas. At a turn in the road the great trees sweep aside a little to make room for a tiny hamlet at their foot. Here in the open shop of the grain dealer, round a little lamp, sits a group of men, and amongst them is a boy reading earnestly from a book.

It is the Ramayana,—the tale of the wanderings of the heroic lovers, Sita and Rama. The men listen breathlessly, though the story is familiar enough, and every now and then as the boy ends a verse, they chant the refrain, "To dear Sita's bridegroom, great Rama, all hail!" Sita is the ideal woman. A divine incarnation to the world of perfect wifehood and perfect stainlessness. She is the woman of renunciation, not of action; the saint, not the heroine. Every Indian woman spends some part of the day in the contemplation of this character. Probably no one passes a whole day without taking her name. Every woman desires to be like her. Every man desires to see in her the picture of his mother or his wife. I do not know if you will see with me the tremendous influence that it must have on the character and development of a nation, to spend a definite time daily in this intense brooding over the ideal.

It is here that I come to my great point, and I must make it clear from misapprehension. I shall not mean that the lot of the Hindu woman in her perpetual struggle with poverty, in her social and industrial inefficiency, is perfect, or perfectly adapted to the modern world. Far from that.

But I remember that some of the greatest men and women that ever lived have been born in India. I remember that from India emanated the only religion that ever put the missionary-question on a true educational basis; I remember that amongst military leaders two thousand years ago India produced her Napoleon Bonaparte, in Chandragupta, the Sudra who unified a continent; that amongst statesmen she bore Asoka and Akbar; that in science we owe mathematics and astronomy and geometry to her; that in philosophy and in literature she has achieved the highest rank.

I remember too that this greatness is not dead in the country. No longer ago than 1750 Rajah Jey Sing concluded



that European astronomical tables contained an error which he was able to correct. Subsequent science, it is said, stood by the Indian astronomer. Within the century that is leaving us Ram Chandra has solved, by intuitive methods, problems of maxima and minima hitherto unfinished, and India has given proof that she can yet add to her scientific laurels.

Seeing all this, I read a message of great hope for humanity. What may be the truth about the military careers of nations, I do not know. It may be that in rude activities there are periods of growth and flourishing and decay. But if a people fix their hope upon their own humanisation, it is not so. The curve of civilisation is infinite and spiral. The dominion of the human mind and spirit has yet to be exhausted.

But still—where—why—is this humanising process the essential life of India, more than of other countries? What differentiates the Indian training from others? I find one answer which outweighs all others in my estimate. It is this. The special greatness of Indian life and character depends more than on any other feature, on the place that is given to Woman in the social scheme. What? you will say, what about child-marriage and child-widowhood, and the grievances of woman? I am not going to speak of woman as the wife. There must be unhappy marriages in India as elsewhere, though I have seen none but the happy, and they have seemed to me to represent a tie more tender and intimate than I have often witnessed. But wifehood in India is not woman's central function. That is motherhood. As mother, an Indian woman is supreme. The honour that a man does here by the simple words "my wife," he does better there by saying "the mother of my children." Sons worship their mothers as the ideal. Motherhood is the ideal relation to the world. Let us free ourselves from self-seeking as the mother does. Let us be incapable of jealousy as is a mother to her child. Let us give to the uttermost. Let us love most those who need most. Let us be indiscriminating in our service. Such is the Indian woman's conception of a perfect life. Such is the moral culture with which she surrounds her children. Can you ask what is its effect? I sat one day hour after hour beside a boy of twelve who was dying of plague. The home was of the poorest, a mud hut with a thatched roof. The difficulty lay in keeping the patient isolated from his family. There was one woman who came and went about the bedside perpetually, in an utter recklessness of her own safety, and at last I ventured to remonstrate, pointing out that my presence was of no use, if I could not save her this exposure. She obeyed me instantly, without a word, but as she went, hid her face in her veil crying softly. It was the lad's mother. Of course I found a place where she could sit with his head on her feet, curled up behind him in comparative security, fanning him, and then,



through all the hours of that hot day, till sunset came, I had a picture before me of perfect love. "Mataji! Mataji! *Adored Mother!*" was the name he called her by. Now and then, mistaking me for her, he smiled his perfect contentment into my eyes, and once he snatched at my hand and carried his own to his lips. And this was a child of the Calcutta slums!

But it is not the child only. The word *mother* is the endless shore on which all Indian souls find harbour. In moments of great agony it is not with them, "My God!" but "Oh Mother!"

A woman in the neighbourhood was wailing loudly in the dark, and the sound disturbed one who was lying ill. An attendant on the sick came down into the woman's hut to find her, and, guided by her cries, came up to her quietly and put an arm about her. The wailing ceased as suddenly as it had begun, and she fell back with long sobs; "You are my *mother!*" was all that she could say.

If the word "God" meant as much to us as "Mother" to this bereaved soul, what might we not reach? And to many in India it is so. The two ideas are one. Life with all its inexplicable torture and its passing gleams of joy is but the play of the Divine Motherhood of the Universe, with Her children. If we can understand this, all happenings will become alike fortunate. We must cease to discriminate. And so in every temple dedicated to this idea, the visitor enters with the prayer:

Thou,—the Giver of all blessings,  
Thou,—the Giver of all desires,  
Thou,—the Giver of all good,

To Thee our salutation, Thee we salute, Thee we salute,  
Thee we salute.

Thou terrible dark Night!  
Thou, the Night of delusion!  
Thou, the Night of Death!

To Thee our salutation,—Thee we salute, Thee we salute,  
Thee we salute.

And this rises up daily from end to end of the country together with that other prayer to the Soul of the Universe which to me seems the most beautiful in any language.

From the Unreal lead us to the Real,  
From Darkness lead us unto Light,  
From Death lead us to Immortality,  
Reach us through and through ourselves,  
And ever more protect us—O Thou Terrible!  
From ignorance, by Thy sweet compassionate face.



## THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY

In submitting the report of the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary for the year 1926 we take the opportunity to record our sincere gratitude to the kind-hearted donors and subscribers to the funds for the maintenance of the Dispensary. We also acknowledge our profound indebtedness to Messrs. B. K. Paul & Co. of Calcutta for the generosity they have shown us in supplying free 6 bottles of Edward's Tonic and other medicines and accessories at concession rates. It is a matter of regret however that contributions are not forthcoming to the Permanent Fund of the Dispensary in such a measure as to facilitate our work. From the statement of accounts for the year it would be seen that the total receipts during the year were however greater than the total disbursements, but that is due to the fact that the relief given by the Dispensary during this year was comparatively less than in the previous year. In 1925 the total number relieved was 3,197 whereas this year it is only 1,102. Had it been able to continue its work as in 1925, then the total receipts would have fallen far shorter than the total disbursements. But unfortunately our doctor was laid ill for a long period till ultimately he had to leave the work and undergo treatment. Being himself a member of the monastic order and given to the ideal of serving humanity, he had always been anxious and overzealous about the welfare of his patients, even risking his health if by that he could relieve their pains ever so little. As a result he caught that fell disease, Pthisis, while attending a patient and had to suffer for long; but we are glad that he is now much better and almost his normal self again after prolonged treatment. It was sometime before we could realise that our doctor will have to retire for a long period from work and also before the authorities of the Mission could spare us another of its members with medical qualifications, and naturally during this period the Dispensary had to remain closed. This explains the low figures for the year.

The total number relieved during the year at the outdoor dispensary was 1,090 of which 25 were old cases. Of these patients 494 were men, 247 women, and 349 were children. As many as 176 were patients of other faiths than Hinduism—a number which though small is yet pretty big considering the smallness of their population in the hills round about the Dispensary. The number of patients admitted into the Hospital was 12 of which 6 were cured, 5 relieved and 1 died. Among them 5 were men and 7 women.

### STATEMENT OF DISEASES.

Dysentery	...	...	18	Eye-diseases	...	...	193
Fever	...	...	129	Ear-diseases	...	...	13
Malarial Fever	...	...	77	Bronchitis	...	...	1
Rheumatic affection	...	...	62	Pneumonia	...	...	2
Debility	...	...	38	Asthma	...	...	10
Headache	...	...	14	Cough	...	...	93



Colic	...	...	42	Gout	...	...	2
Piles	...	...	2	Toothache	...	...	15
Spleen	...	...	6	Operation	...	...	15
Dropsy	...	...	5	Phthisis	...	...	8
Skin-diseases	...	...	117	Dyspepsia and Constipation	...	...	69
Ulcer	...	...	59	Boil	...	...	19
Injury	...	...	13	Pain (local)	...	...	10
M. disease	...	...	11	Diarrhœa	...	...	41
F. disease	...	...	3				
Worms	...	...	15	Total			1,102

## SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR 1926.

Income				Expenditure			
	Rs.	A.	P.				
Last year's balance	2,428	13	7	Doctor's maintenance			
Donations, etc.	798	4	0	and travelling	360	0	0
Interest	100	0	0	Medicine	280	10	6
Miscellaneous	1	4	0	Freight for medicine	48	0	6
				Hospital requisites & instruments	33	12	0
					722	7	0
	3,328	5	7	Balance	2,605	14	7

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

(Sd.) SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA,  
President, Advaita Ashrama,  
Mayavati, Almora, U. P.

## NOTICES OF BOOKS

## English

THE STORY OF MY EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH VOL. I—by M. K. Gandhi. Published by the Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad. Pp. 602. With frontispiece. Price Rs. 5/8.

Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography does not require any introduction at our hands at this late hour. This has regularly appeared in translation from the original Gujarati in the "Young India" week after week and has been widely quoted by monthlies and dailies all over India and also abroad. The work is not yet half done and is being still continued in Mahatma Gandhi's weeklies. We can only say that every Indian and also Westerner should read this book and deeply ponder over the "experiments" of Mahatma Gandhi. The get-up of the book is excellent, for which great credit is due to the Navajivan Press. We hope to be able in future to deal in details with some features of the Mahatmaji's wonderful life. We would only mention at present that



his observations on Sister Nivedita ought not to have been allowed to be printed in the book without due modifications. The short footnote will help none who have not read the particular number of "Young India," The "Young India" note also was not perfect. Mahatma Gandhi explained therein only his difficulties regarding the word *volatile*. But what about "the splendour that surrounded her"? *The Vedanta Kesari* of Madras gave a comprehensive reply to Mahatma Gandhi's remarks on the Sister. Mahatmaji is expected to have seen it. The modification of the offending passage in accordance with the information that came to him later on, would have been more truthful in our opinion.

#### CONSOLIDATION OF THE CHRISTIAN POWER IN INDIA—by

Major B. D. Basu, I.M.S. (Retired). Published by R. Chatterjee, 91, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. Pp. 118. Price cloth Re. 1/8.

The present book is a sequel to Major Basu's much larger work, *Rise of the Christian Power in India*. It consists of 16 short chapters dealing with such topics as the Christianization of India, "The Mohammedan Religion must be suppressed," Policy of Divide and Rule, Centralization of Power, Keeping India in Debt, The Queen's Proclamation, "Overawing" and "Striking Terror into" the Punjabis, etc. All of them are based on and liberally interspersed with quotations from contemporary English authors. The tale that this little book unfolds is extremely unfavourable to the British and proves the well-known fact that the conquest of one nation by another is scarcely done by honest means for honest purposes. We refrain from going into details, but if the documents quoted from are authoritative, then they certainly shed a lurid light on British ventures in India. We do not meet with these facts in current Indian histories. Major Basu should be congratulated on these his laborious and original researches.

*DYNAMIC RELIGION* by Swami Prabhavananda. Published by the Vedanta Society, Wheelodon Annex, 10th and Salmon Streets, Portland, Oregon, U. S. A. Pp. 50.

Hitherto Swami Prabhavananda has given out his ideas for the wider American public in the form of pamphlets. But the present book containing five lectures—on "What is Yoga?" "Fullness of Life," "The Art of Living," "The Acid Test of a Teacher," and "The Path of Discipleship"—is a solid product and gives a fairly comprehensive idea of what spiritual life in ideal and practice is. As such it is bound to be extremely helpful to the Western readers, especially American; for America is overrun by many metaphysical sects with little or no understanding of true religion yet eagerly preaching all kinds of possible and impossible doctrines obviously for material gains; and their victims are often unable to know the chaff from the grain. The Swami has mercilessly exposed these pretensions and pointed out that spirituality is concerned with the spirit alone and by and for that alone must it be judged and sought. He has also shown what should be the qualifications of a true religious teacher and a seeker of religion. We are sure the book will be of immense help to many in their path-finding through the jungles of irresponsible teachings. Nicely printed.



**PALMS AND TEMPLEBELLS** by *A. Christina Albers*. Published by the author from 29, Benlapukur Road, Calcutta. Pp. 150.

We had occasions to review other books of poems of the author before. The present is also a book of poems, the themes of which are almost all Indian. This fact itself renders the author's writings dear to us. For, though a Christian and evidently of foreign birth and education, she possesses the true poetic imagination to enter into the sweet secrets of Indian life and feel as an Indian would feel. This is itself no mean achievement. Added to it there is the author's undeniable command of words and rhyme which confers a peculiar charm on her book. There are both short and long pieces in it and we are sure poetically disposed readers can beguile a pleasant half hour amidst its closely printed pages.

**NATURE'S BROTHERHOOD** by *Saladin Reys*. The Red Rose Press, Santa Barbara, Calif., U. S. A. Pp. 53.

Contains 21 well-written short parables and stories to inculcate such spiritual virtues as humility, unity, love, unselfishness, etc. "All beings are of one love. Receiving this is simpler than the breathing of a flower." "To one guiding spirit in all being we give our hearts to become the expression of outpouring understanding." The printing is fine.

**PARALLEL QUOTATIONS** by *T. V. Kulkarni, B.A., LL.B., Dhulla, Bombay*. Pp. 104. Price Rs. 12.

It contains 300 instances of the similarity of thought and expression between English and Sanskrit authors of repute, and will be helpful to students. Get-up indifferent.

### Hindi

**BALA-KATHA-KAHANT PART II** by *Ramnaresh Tripathi*. Published by the Hindi Mandir, Allahabad. Pp. 71. Price Rs. 6.

A very nice book, printed in various coloured inks and illustrated, containing 15 short well-written stories for children.

**HINDI SANDESH** and **VARNA-DASHA** by *Ramvachan Dwivedi*. To be had of *Bidhu Sahitya-mandir, Gaya*.

Two booklets of verses.

### Bengali

**NACHIKETA** by *Swami Sambuddhananda*. Published by the Ramakrishna Math, Sonargaon, Dacca, Bengal. Pp. 50. Price Rs. 6.

This is a dramatisation of the story of Nachiketa as given in the Katha Upanishad. The author has also added new features. Swami Sharvananda observes in the preface contributed by him to the book, "The present author in his dramatisation has improved upon the Upanishads by introducing into the plot the three characters of a peasant, a learned scholar and a Sadhak. By juxtaposing the Pundit against the peasant the author has cleverly shown that truth can never be attained by mere intellectual scholarship. . . . . But an unsophisticated mind can reach the truth by faith and devotion."

We are sure the little drama can be finely acted by students.



It will prove not only interesting but also instructive. We congratulate the author on this new venture.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Raghavananda's Work in Philadelphia, U. S. A.

Mrs. M. L. Barker, a senior member of the Philadelphia Vedanta Society writes to us :

In the autumn of the year 1924 four people, living in Philadelphia, met together with Swami Raghavananda from the New York Vedanta Society, to form a nucleus of a branch of Vedanta in this city.

This first meeting was held in a room in the Grand Fraternity Building in Arch Street, and for one season, lasting from October, 1924 to the last of May, 1925; Vedanta Philosophy was ably expounded in lectures before the public every Sunday evening. Also a small members' group received meditative instruction either before or after the public lecture, the study book being Patanjali Yoga Aphorisms.

This first year Swami came over to Philadelphia and returned the same night to New York, some two hours' train ride. The members' dues and the public offering and sometimes donations, paid the expenses of train fare, rent, advertising, etc. At these public meetings, there were from twenty to forty in attendance, the number varying each Sunday. The membership was never very large, the greatest number at any one time during these three years of work, ranged from ten to twelve members. Many strangers came to speak to Swami Raghavananda after the lectures, some seemingly very much interested. There were regular attendants during all this time but four joined the Society. The second and third year the Society rented a room in St. James' Hotel, 13th and Walnut Streets, which room was found to be very much more suitable in every way.

It was thought to be better for Swami to remain overnight part of the second year and all of the third, renting a room in the same hotel. For part of these years extra members' meetings were held in Swami's room. These private meetings were much appreciated by the members, for it gave them an opportunity to ask questions and to get a deeper insight into Vedanta philosophy. Under Swami's instruction we studied the Bhagavad Gita and he also told us many wonderfully illuminating stories about, and incidents in, the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. We had some books to read in the teachings of Vedanta and the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, and much help and understanding was granted us through these talks and books.

Those of us who read the life of Sri Ramakrishna and that of Swami Vivekananda were truly drawn in sincere love and devotion to make efforts and to practise these wonderful but simple truths and to simulate, even if in a very humble way, the lives of these two mighty God-men. A new rhythm was set up, for some of our members, for all time. Swami Raghavananda was faithful and untiring in his appeals to our hearts, and his strivings to have us meditate.

During these years, we had hoped to increase our membership but



though a number of regular attendants spoke of joining, we still remained a small but interested group. Philadelphia has always been considered quite conservative and we found it so in our lack of growth in numbers, yet those who came regularly to listen to Swami Raghavananda could not but receive much insight into the uplifting and truly satisfying teachings of Vedanta. Some persons said that they had never listened to a more scholarly exposition of any religious or philosophical subject. Some of the lecture titles were as follows :

1. The Art of Concentration and Meditation.
2. Practising the Presence of God.
3. The Religion of Devotion.
4. The Religion of Work.
5. The Religion of Knowledge.
6. Unity of Religions.
7. The Motherhood of God.
8. Five Great Saviours of the World.
9. The Self and its five Sheaths.
10. Psychological Significance of Death.
11. Significance of Ceremonies for the Departed.
12. The Resurrection, an Eastern Exposition.

It was with sincere regret that we learned that Swami thought he would return to India because of his health. He had not seemed well for quite a long time and we had hoped a vacation in the country would renew his body and mind but as the months increased, his strength seemed to decrease and we realized that we must part from our teacher for a shorter or a longer time, but we still hope for a renewal of Vedanta work in Philadelphia in the future.

We are indeed grateful for the unselfish work that Swami Raghavananda has done in our city of Philadelphia. He brought us the gift of Vedanta philosophy and in that bringing, he gave of himself "without money and without price," cheerfully, hopefully and withal in good fellowship.

Swami visited in our homes for an evening's refreshment of body and soul occasionally, and he left his blessing with us.

We wish him, in our prayers and daily thoughts, all good and pray the Divine Mother to grant him health and if it is Her Divine Will, that he may resume his work in the not too distant future somewhere, either in America or some other country.

#### **Swami Raghavananda's arrival from America**

Swami Raghavananda of the Vedanta Society, New York, U. S. A. arrived at the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras from Colombo on the morning of the 23rd August last, after a stay of four years in America. Early in June last, he left America and came to London, where he stayed for some time. In London he spoke on several occasions to small groups of people and held class on Hindu religion and philosophy. In Holland he stayed a few days with a friend and spoke on one occasion to a small group on Vedanta. In Berlin, Prof. Glasenapp of the Berlin University invited him to take



one of his lectures in the Oriental Seminary. And there the Swami spoke to an audience of students and professors on "Yoga and its Relation to Indian Life." Prof. Glasenapp who presided, translated the lecture in German for those who did not understand English. Then passing through France and after a few days' stay in Paris, he took boat at Marseilles and reached Colombo on the 20th August. In Colombo, Swamis Vipulananda and Avinashananda met him, and he stayed with them for some time and spoke on the day he left to friends and members of the local Vivekananda Society on the Message of Vedanta in the West. At Madras also he spoke on several occasions to appreciative audiences.

#### **Flood-relief in Orissa and Guzerat**

Swami Suddhananda, Secretary, R. K. Mission, has issued the following appeal to the public :

The public is hereby informed that the Ramakrishna Mission has started relief works in the flooded areas of the District of Balasore. It is well known that the people of Orissa are generally poverty-stricken and the havoc caused by the floods have highly aggravated the situation. To ameliorate the sufferings of these poor people several parties have opened relief centres but sufficient men and money are necessary to cope with the present critical situation.

The Mission has also undertaken relief work in Cambay-Guzerat and has opened centres at Sayema and Tarapore in Kaira District there. 75 villages are being relieved from 3 centres. Shops have been opened to supply at a cheap rate rice and seeds to persons who are unwilling to accept gratuitous relief from religious and social considerations.

We appeal, on behalf of the suffering humanity, to the generous public for help. Any contribution in cash or kind, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by. (1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Dist. Howrah. (2) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Bagh Bazar, Calcutta. (3) The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Khar, Bombay.

#### **The Ramakrishna Mission, Ooty**

A very interesting function took place on Wednesday, the 10th August in the presence of a large gathering, when the Ramakrishna Mission branch at Ootacamund, received a free gift of the handsome Panchakshara Hall from some wealthy Indian planters of the Nilgiris. The Hall which is situated close to the main bazar is a decent building where religious discourses can regularly be delivered for the benefit of the townspeople. The object of the function was to hand over the title-deeds of this property formally to Swami Yatiswarananda, President of the R. K. Mission, Madras, who had gone there for the purpose.

During the function another timely gift came from the hands of His Highness the Maharaja of Jodhpur. His Highness sent a sum of Rs. 4000 in addition to Rs. 1000 already given by him towards the expenses for putting up the habitation of the Mission at Ooty, recognising thereby the Mission work and showing His Highness's interest in the welfare of the Hindus inhabiting the hills.



# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य ब्रह्मनिर्बोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. 44. 14.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE

(Concluded from the last issue)

About a month after, S. came from Benares to Koalpara on a visit to the Holy Mother. He and Manindra went in the morning to see her at the Jagadamba Ashrama. The conversation by and by turned on Benares.

S. observed: "The old women who go to Benares to die, suffer terribly. Many of them perhaps no longer receive their monthly money allowance from home. And they have to live in damp ground floor rooms."

Mother.— Yes, I also noted their misery while I lived there. I found them sometimes eating the rice of their begging simply soaking it in water, without cooking it.

S.— By coming to Benares, the old ladies become rather long-lived.

Mother.— That is because they are purged of their sin by seeing and touching Viswanath. In Brindaban also they attain longevity by sprinkling holy water on their person and taking the sacramental food.

S. spoke to the Mother of the sufferings of the country. He said: "I am told nearly sixty lacs of people have died in India of influenza. The price of rice and other food articles have gone very high ;—there is no end to people's sufferings".



Mother.— Yes, my child, people have nothing to eat. And the misery of those who have families is greater still. The suffering has just begun ; it won't be alleviated till there are rains and a good harvest.

S.— The sufferings of the country are increasing daily. There is so much suffering everywhere ;—is it due to people's karma ?

Mother.— Can all people have such karma ? It is due to the change in the 'atmosphere'.

S.— So much suffering, so much warfare,—is it because we are on the transition to a new Age ?

Mother.— (*smiling*) How can I say ? How can I know what the Lord has willed ? The sins of kings,—their envy, jealousy, wickedness, destruction of holy men,—all these ruin kingdoms. The misdeeds of kings cause suffering to their people . . . . Victoria was indeed a noble queen. During her reign, people lived happily and comfortably. Now even a child of five years understands what is sorrow. By the bye, Sarat has arranged to distribute rice here. How much of it has been given away ?

Manindra.— I do not know the exact amount. But I am told about thirty-four Rupees worth of rice is distributed every week.

Mother.— What is the rate per head ?

Manindra.— A quarter seer of rice.

Mother.— How much does a recipient get ?

Manindra.— Six, seven or eight seers, according to the number of his or her family members.

Mother.— How many people in all received rice ?

Manindra.— I do not know exactly. But most of them are Muhammadan women.

Mother.— Yes, the Mussalmans are poorer here . . . At what other places is Sarat giving away rice ?

Manindra.— At Bankura, Indapur and Manbhum. He is working wherever there is famine.

Mother.— Are the boys going there ?

S.— Yes, from the Math.

\* \* \* \* \*

One afternoon, a month after the previous occasion, Manindra and Prabodh Babu went to visit the Mother. They wanted to send their daughters to the Nivedita Girls' School in Calcutta. When they asked for Mother's opinion, she readily approved of their idea and told them to refer to Swami Saradananda.

Prabodh.— Yes, Mother, I have already written to him.

A lady disciple who was present there, remarked :  
"Would they be able to live there ? They are so young !"



Mother.— Certainly they would. Girls from East Bengal, scarcely seven years old, live there. They show great reluctance to go home even when their parents come to take them.

Prabodh.— I went to see the village this morning. People's misery is great. They have scarcely any cloth to wear,—they could not come out before us. And their roofs are bare of thatch.

Mother.— Were they given rice?

Prabodh.— Yes, they have been given last Sunday.

Mother.— Are they given clothes?

Prabodh.— Yes, the deserving cases receive clothes . . . .

Mother, I am told you once had a dream in which you saw a woman standing with a pitcher and a broomstick in her hands—

Mother.— Yes, I saw a woman standing with a pitcher and a broomstick in her hands. I asked her: "Who are you?" She said: "I will sweep everything." I asked again: "What will happen next?" She replied: "I shall then sprinkle nectar all over from the pitcher." Perchance that is what is happening now. . . . .

Next day when they again went to the Mother, Prabodh Babu asked her: "Mother, should one forcibly renounce the world?"

Mother at once replied with a smile: "People do so."

Prabodh.— If people renounce the world on their own initiative before receiving the gracious assent of the Divine Mother, I fear they have trouble.

Mother.— They return home.

Manindra.—Did the Master give Sannyasa\* to the elders of the Ramakrishna Order?

Mother.— I am not sure if he gave. No, he did not; probably Swamiji† gave.

Manindra.— Swamiji also had to suffer much. He however 'crossed over',— his body did not give way.

Mother.— No, he also had physical suffering. He had diabetes, and his body would burn the whole day. But he still worked on till he was at death's door.

Prabodh.— I have heard that at Darjeeling he clasped Hari Maharaj by the neck and said to him weeping, "Brother, I am dying working alone, while you are keeping aloof busy only with your *tapasya*."

Mother.— Yes, my child, he gave his life-blood at the service of others. He did all these (Maths, etc.) after his return from the West;— that is how the boys have now got a shelter. There are now four boys working in the West.

\* i.e. *formal* Sannyasa.

† Swami Vivekananda.



Prabodh.— Yes, Mother,— Swami Abhedananda, Swami Prakashananda, Swami Paramananda and Swami Bodhananda.

Mother.— What is Kali's name?

Manindra.— Swami Abhedananda.

Mother.— Basanta\* writes to me and sends money. He delivers lectures there . . . . Yogen† practised hard tapasya. He kept some dried and powdered *chapatis*‡ with him and lived upon them. This resulted in serious stomach troubles and eventually in his death. . . . There is no happiness in the world ;—it is only momentary. The world is a poison tree and it poisons man. But those who have already entered the world, what can they do? They have no help, even though they may feel its true nature.

Manindra and Prabodh Babu made their obeisance to the Mother and returned.

They went again to the Mother in the evening. Prabodh Babu said to her: "Mother, I have received Sarat Maharaj's reply. Shall I read it out to you?"

Mother.— Yes, do.

Prabodh Babu read the letter which contained among other things the passage: "Even though you have my approval, the Lord's will is against placing Vina (Prabodh Babu's daughter) here (in the Nivedita School)."

Mother.— Why has he written like this? He has sent a final negative answer. Probably Sudhira\* did not agree. Sudhira once said to me: "Mother, I cannot do any more,— I am suffering terribly." She works very hard indeed for the girls. When she cannot meet the expenses of the School, she engages herself as a teacher of music to rich households and earns thereby some forty or fifty rupees a month. She has taught everything to the School girls,—sewing, tailoring, etc. She made a profit of Rs. 300 the other year from the tailoring department. She spent this in taking the girls on excursion to different places during the Puja holidays. She is Devavrata's† sister. He taught her self-reliance and courage by going with her to Ry. stations and then hiding himself and making her buy tickets and board train, etc., alone.

Two girls from Madras, about twenty-two years old, are living in the Nivedita School. They are not married. How

\* Swami Paramananda.

† Swami Yogananda, one of the most prominent disciples of Sri Ramakrishna.

‡ A kind of bread.

\* She was at that time in charge of the Nivedita School.

† His monastic name was Swami Prajnananda. He was Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* and President of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama from 1914 to 1918.



beautifully they are learning different works! Look on the other hand at our wretched part of the country,—they are anxious to marry away a girl even before she is scarcely eight years old. Oh, if Radhu had not been married, would she have suffered so much!

## "BECAUSE STRAIGHT IS THE GATE AND NARROW IS THE WAY"

BY THE EDITOR

In our September article we pointed out that the marriage vow may in future signify also other life-ideals for women than *Sati-dharma*. This statement has been viewed with suspicion by some of our friends. Do we underrate the value of chastity in married life or in any life for the matter of that? Do we not believe that married life to be worth anything must be sanctified by the whole-hearted love and devotion of the wife? We confess we were not prepared for these misgivings. For, we clearly mentioned that whatever the change in the marriage ideal, the new would never be less honourable than the old. We said that life for Indian men and women must always be an uphill journey. But perhaps we must clear our position further and point out what value really attaches to chastity.

The fears of our friends are the consequence of a panicky atmosphere. In Bengal, and partly also in other provinces, the idea is being sedulously spread mainly by some irresponsible writers that the Hindu marriage ideal is unnecessarily and unnaturally too strict. They have not yet gone so far as to decry chastity. But they suggest that a woman may have other men friends than her husband and *vice versa*, and that whereas the body should remain faithful to the marriage vow, the heart may seek a wider range of satisfaction. That is to say, the Western glamour is catching our people also. Nothing can be more pernicious than this. When we spoke of rival ideals to *Sati-dharma*, we did not mean this kind of degeneracy. Chastity there *must* be in all cases, not merely formal but also in the spirit. Without the spirit, the form amounts to nothing and is *mithyâchâra*.

Apart from domestic and blood relations, there can be these several relations between men and women: It may be one of ignoring the sexual difference, looking upon one another as either mind or spirit,—a relation which is possible only between highly intellectual and spiritual people. Or it may be one of recognising the fact of sex, in which case a woman may be looked upon either as *ramani* or as mother or sister.



*Ramani* is a Sanskrit word and means *delighter*. In the West the undomestic relations between men and women seem mainly grounded on the conception of woman as *ramani*. She is the pure feminine,—the counterpart of the masculine. Her femininity is not considered in the West as a thing to be guarded against; it is on the other hand man's inspirer and delighter. It acts subtly as an atmosphere of inspiration and joy and energises and fulfils the masculine mind.\* The Hindu however does not believe in the soundness and ultimate wholesomeness of this relation between men and women and advocates a mutual attitude which is free from the possibility of any emotional crisis, that is to say, the filial attitude. It is true that in the West a woman has the right to inspire and delight other men than her husband, and a man also expects this from other women than his wife. In fact, a husband would be called a tyrant if he wants to monopolise his wife in this respect. Not so in India. Here such a prospect is considered scandalous. Here the husband and wife are for themselves alone. We have no society queens. Is it a loss or a gain?

The Hindu mind looks deeper into things and discovers that what is generally called the *hladini sakti* of woman is nothing but the sexual influence in a fine and diffuse form and that its actions on the masculine mind, though apparently inspiring, are fundamentally sexual (we use the word also in its finer sense). Therefore to those who believe that the fulfilment of life and Self-realisation consists in transcending the sexual impulse, not only is the promiscuous mixing of men and women an injurious thing but even married life is not sufficiently pure and desirable and needs to be sublimated into a sexless companionship. To them woman must reveal herself as sexless or in such a form as is not tainted by the consciousness of lust, that is to say, as mother. The Hindu ideal of life emphasises the elimination of sex-consciousness as a necessary preliminary to spiritual attainments. The Hindu's keen analytical mind is never satisfied with the superficial view of things. It refuses to affix the stamp of finality on what is called the normal life. 'Normal' is nothing but a passing state. That alone is truly normal which is permanent. Is our present aspect of life permanent? If not, it requires to be changed, moulded and disciplined. The apparently

\* Rabindranath Tagore has named this *hladini sakti*, the delighting power, and he holds that its restrictions within domestic limits has cramped the growth of man. He goes so far as to hold that this inspiration of woman is necessary even in spiritual *sadhana* and observes that the service of Sujata to Buddha is for this reason significant and that Jesus' nature sought for its perfection the devotion of Mary and Martha (*Prabasi*, Aug.-Sept.). Strange! But perhaps it is useless to expect one who has not renounced the world to correctly understand the psychology of a God-intoxicated monk.



energising and charming influence of woman is true of that life only which is called normal and which is mainly physical, partly intellectual and very little spiritual. The very consciousness of the feminine as the source of inspiration and delight is based on the consciousness of the difference of her sex, and her influence is therefore directly or indirectly a stimulant to man's sex-consciousness. Sex-attractions go to the root of creation and are the very texture of cosmic illusion. Why do we suffer? Why are we ignorant? Why powerless? The seers answer, it is because we have forgotten our true nature which is spiritual and identified ourselves with body and mind. What is that which has so deluded us? It is Maya and it has two forms,—*Kama* and *Kanchana*, lust and gold, of which *Kama* is essential. This *Kama* is at the root of creation, sex-difference and sex-consciousness. It is not so superficial as it may seem. It spreads its roots into the deeper strata of the mind. And our delight and eagerness for the company of the opposite sex are the promptings of that fundamental *hrid-roga*, 'disease of the heart'. *This analysis is not fanciful, it is sternly real. Psycho-analysis has proved it partly. But the complete proof comes to all those who sincerely try to perceive the Real and the Spiritual.* That is why all over the world all deeply spiritual natures have tended towards monasticism which is sternly opposed to all kinds of sex-indulgence, gross or subtle. The Hindu mind bases its social codes on this truth. It taboos the free association of sexes\* and refuses to allow any opportunity to man to indulge in the elemental delight of the company of any other woman than his wife. It discourages inter-sexual *friendship* for its own sake, for it finds that this so-called friendship, when the motive of the association of men and women is not intellectual or spiritual, is nothing but the primeval sex-attraction in disguise—ugly so dressed in satin—and that *such association only strengthens the fetters of ignorance and infatuation, which to break is the sole purpose of every man's life.* And here lies the true significance of chastity. It is not merely physical abstention. It is mainly and essentially mental. It is the refusal to hug the delusion that lies in the heart of sexual joy in all its forms and setting one's face towards the Truth, the One, the opposite

\* By this we do not of course advocate the *purdah*. We are only pointing to the attitude that the sexes should assume towards each other. Men and women will come into more and more intimate contact in all fields of life with the passing of days. But it is essential that the traditional Hindu attitude of looking on all women as fragments of Divine Motherhood should not be lost sight of. This attitude may not always be held *explicitly*. But the relation must in any case be such as is least associated with sex-idea,—it certainly cannot be one of gallantry. The main point must never be forgotten,—the idea of chastity, in word, thought and deed, conscious and sub-conscious.



of Many which is creation and which perpetuates itself through procreation.

It will be clear from the above that we can never advocate anything which affects the ideal of chastity in the slightest measure. Our national ideal is chastity. The choice is not arbitrary but is inspired by the knowledge that through chastity alone man can ever reach the Truth. No man or nation that seeks to find the Eternal can minimise its importance. The Hindu national and individual ideal is the experience of the Real. Therefore the Hindu hugs the ideal of chastity to his bosom as a most precious heritage. The West as a whole and *generally* speaking also individually, does not aim so high. It aims at worldly and intellectual achievements. The Western civilisation is at best intellectual and not pre-eminently spiritual like the Indian. It is no wonder therefore that it does not attach much importance to chastity. When we seek *bhoga*, enjoyment, chastity is of little consequence. But for *tyaga*, renunciation (and therefore the acquisition of the spiritual), it is indispensable. Were we therefore to imitate the West in this respect, we would not only lose our ideal but also be debilitated and reduced to spineless existence.

It has been said that without the sunshine of feminine charms the powers of man cannot fully blossom, that there is in every man's heart a secret desire for the taste of joy and love, which thirsts for satisfaction, and that without such satisfaction life becomes dry and imperfect and powers are dwarfed. As to the necessity of feminine influence for life's fruition, it may be partly true. But if looking on a woman as a physical and mental being and a thing of enjoyment (however refined) be beneficial, will not a spiritual and worshipful attitude towards her be a thousand times more beneficial? To look upon woman as mother is a million times more honourable to her and helpful to ourselves than a behaviour that has at least an indirect reference to her physical and youthful charms. The heart no doubt longs for the sweets of love. But it is absurd to maintain that it must always be satisfied. We hold that these innate longings are capable of being idealised and spiritualised; and then only do they contribute to the success of life. It may be that those in whom the carnal passions are too strong will have to satisfy their yearnings for love and joy through sexual experience. But those in whom the

\* Swami Vivekananda observes in one of his letters: "Without the grace of Sakti (Woman) nothing is to be accomplished. What do I find in America and Europe?--the worship of Sakti. Yet they worship Her ignorantly through sense-gratification. Imagine, then, what a lot of good they will achieve who will worship Her with purity, in a Sattvika spirit, looking upon Her as Mother!"



higher consciousness is even partly awakened can spiritualise those feelings and realise thereby a superior life and joy. Hinduism concedes that the undeveloped should marry. But marriage is not an end in itself. It is after all a compromise, a concession to weakness and is redeemed only by being sublimated to spiritual companionship. Romance is secondary to this ideal of marriage and the predominant tendency is the spiritualisation of emotions and impulses.

Certain curious ideas about married life are being held forth. It is said, for example, that the romance of love is the basis of wedded life. But alas, realities are too strong for it. Post-marital realities destroy the dream of romance in most cases, married life proves miserable and there is no end to devising means for evading this disastrous consequence. Married life, according to this view, is an all-engrossing passion in which two minds are ever seeking to absorb themselves in each other. We must confess that if such a view be true, married life must be the most miserable thing conceivable. Love there should be, but a life-long romance! In this world of ugly happenings, such an ideal is scarcely realisable. If therefore any man or woman seeks to realise it, bitter disappointment must be the consequence. And in fact such it has been. In the West where this romantic view of marriage is prevalent, cases of disappointment are numerous. And we in India also seem to have caught its infection. Our novelists and story-writers are indefatigable in depicting the beauty of this romance and of course the Hindu ideal of marriage comes in for severe castigation. If a life-long romance of love were realisable, it would no doubt have been very poetic. But as has been rightly remarked, such a romance is sure to make the couple inapt for all the large and fruitful ends of social life. The Hindu therefore accords romance a subordinate place in the married life. The wife is the *Saha-dharmini*, a partner in the practice of *dharma*. The unifying bond between the husband and the wife is mainly their common allegiance to the spiritual ideal. The Hindu household is a temple in which every act is sacramental. The husband and the wife are its twin worshippers. Love there will be and the desire for romance, for the average nature craves for them. But this craving is not allowed to overwhelm the higher conscience; and if it is not satisfied, life does not become unbearable and prove a failure. The current of spiritual purposiveness that flows in and through the daily life of the household and the unalienable faith in the Spiritual and the Transcendental as life's ultimate goal more than compensate for the loss of romance. The Hindu woman, therefore, and also Hindu society, does not glorify her *hladini sakti*. She is averse to manifesting it and is eager to occupy that position in others' eye, which



is least associated with that sakti and its essential, sex-consciousness, namely, the position of motherhood. To her husband alone she manifests her hladini sakti, but to all others she is mother. Woman's social recognition is through her motherhood. Her wedded life is considered to have been crowned with success only when she has been blessed with a child. The underlying idea is obvious,—the elimination of sex elements as much as possible. This view of married life spares one many bitter agonies and disappointments and helps the fulfilment of life's true purpose.

The significance of Hindu wifehood often proves a puzzle to many. The glorification of Sati-dharma apparently indicates that the position of the wife is in itself well-recognised and honourable. Yet every wife considers her position truly honourable only when she has become a mother. From yet another standpoint, that marriage is looked upon as the highest in which the husband and wife do not know each other physically and live a life of unbroken continence. Marriage from that point of view is a concession to human weakness which fears to stand alone and seeks the companionship and service of another, and thus falls short of the ultimate ideal—Sannyasa. These three aspects of a wife's position may seem unrelated and mutually contradictory. For it may be quite plausibly argued that if we look upon marriage as a necessary evil, woman's position either as mother or wife has a stigma attached to it. And again if motherhood is the higher ideal, surely the honour of wifehood suffers. This apparent puzzle is easily solved if we remember the idea underlying all these three view-points,—the idea of chastity. Yes, wifehood is glorious if it is instinct with the noble ideal of Sati-dharma or a similar spiritual ideal, for it then becomes a means to higher realisations. Such spiritual idealism presupposes a high degree of sex-control and is therefore much better than vagrancy and debasing sentimentalism. But a woman should emancipate herself from even the restricted sexuality which wifehood implies by bearing one or two children,—motherhood implies sublimation of love-emotions and greatly helps the elimination of sexuality from life—and refusing thereafter to have any carnal relations with her husband. Motherhood therefore indicates a greater realisation of chastity. But it is of course best to maintain absolute continence even though married. Even that however falls short of the highest ideal, for even in it sex-consciousness is not totally absent. The very highest is therefore the monastic ideal. That is why Swami Vivekananda observed in course of a discourse on Indian Women in America: "We are a monastic race. The whole social organization has that one idea before it. Marriage is thought of as something impure, something lower."



That life is the highest which implies the greatest amount of chastity.

We admit that without spiritual idealism, Hindu married life would be extremely dull and fatuous. This idealism saves and glorifies. So long as we can maintain it even to a certain degree, we need not lower the ideal. Life will be quite real and cheerful. Having lost it, we shall be nowhere. This is the redeeming factor of all associational life. The motive must always be spiritual. We do affirm that even in the West, married life, to be more successful and beneficial, must be redeemed by an infusion of the spiritual motive into it. Eager avidity for romance only embitters life and leads to destruction. In fact all inter-relations of sexes must be informed with the spirit of chastity. It is not by lowering the ideal that we can save and fulfil ourselves, but by lifting *ourselves* to the ideal.

The modern age fondly believes that it can solve its problems without troubling men to reform themselves, but simply by a reformation of their environments. This entails a tremendous waste of power and brings about little result. The way to solution is quite contrary. It is men's unruly passions and blinded vision that create problems; and passions must be curbed and vision clarified. The marriage and sex problem has become very keen in the West and is agitating all thinking minds. But how has the West set about solving it? Not by asking men to learn self-discipline but by dragging down ideals and pandering to the cravings of the flesh. We may give here a sample.

Ben. B. Lindsey has been Judge of the Juvenile Court of Denver in America for more than a quarter of a century. This Court "is known throughout the civilised world." "Now, this is what has blown up Judge Lindsey and his Juvenile Court in Denver. After years of experience of adolescent misbehaviour he has come to the conclusion that in our modern community marriage is delayed too late, and that a long and lengthening gap has been opened between the days when school and college are left behind and the days when it seems safe and reasonable to settle down and found a family.

"There is a growing proportion of fretting and impatient young people in the community, and out of their undisciplined eagerness springs a tangle of furtive promiscuity, prostitution, disease, crime and general unhappiness. Young men cannot apply themselves to sound work because of nature's strong preoccupation, and the life of possibly even a majority of young women is a life of tormented uncertainty. Judge Lindsey, with the weight of a new immense experience upon him, and with the assertions of the advocates of birth control before him, has suggested a more orderly accommodation of social life to the new conditions.



"He has proposed a type of preliminary marriage, which he calls Companionate Marriage. This is to be a marriage undertaken by two people for "mutual comfort," as the Prayer-book has it, with a full knowledge of birth control, and with the deliberate intention of not having children. So long as there are no children and with due deliberation, this companionate marriage may be dissolved again by mutual consent. On the other hand, at any time the couple may turn their marriage into the permanent "family marriage" form.

"That is his proposal, and the State of Colorado has full power to make the experiment of such an institution. He wants, such laws to be made. He believes that in most cases such marriages would develop naturally into permanent unions, and that their establishment would clear the social atmosphere of a vast distressful system of illicit relationships, irrevocable blunders, abortions, desertions, crimes, furtive experimenting, and all those dangers to honour, health, and happiness that go with furtiveness in these matters. He believes it would mean a great simplification and purification of social life and the release of much vexed and miserable energy." (Mr. H. G. Wells in *The Sunday Express*, London.)

One may be interested to know what were the experiences that drove Judge Lindsey to propose such a novel experiment. Sometime ago he published in collaboration with another, a book named *The Revolt of Modern Youth*, in which he recounts his experiences with perfect candour and gives facts and figures of sexual delinquency of the modern American youth, which are certainly appalling. We refrain from detailing them. Mr. Wells, in discussing Judge Lindsey's proposal, partly confirms it. He also believes that greater freedom in sexual matters will be more wholesome to individuals and society.

Now this is the answer of the West to the sex question. What is *our* answer? Chastity. The West, we know, would laugh at it. But that is because it does not know the true significance of chastity. India is the only land where it has been truly appreciated and understood. The West will first of all say that it is not practicable by the generality of men and women; and if practised by them, it will cause diseases and nervous disorder. Suppression of sexual desire is dangerous, it holds. Freud's psychoanalysis is also against it and catalogues a long list of dangerous consequences. Our people also seem affected by the Western opinion, and chastity and celibacy have begun to be looked upon by some pedantic fools as abnormal and impracticable.—This in India, the home *par excellence* of monasticism, *Brahmacharya* and spiritual wisdom, as if the practice and example of many millenniums is not a bold and effective



enough answer to this foolish doubt and timidity! *India emphatically declares that chastity is not only practicable to a greater or less degree by the average man, but that it is the only sure means of attaining to true manhood and achieving higher destinies.* There is no danger in it. For chastity is not really the *suppression* of sex impulse but its *elimination*. The practice of chastity must not be considered as a mere physical abstention but as a mental discipline essentially. Without mental control, chastity will be of no avail and may prove even harmful. Mental discipline implies a spiritual outlook upon life and a spiritual atmosphere in the society. India fortunately supplies them abundantly. Mental discipline also must begin with the growth of knowledge, from early boyhood. Hence the institution of Brahmacharya. It is not at all a sound idea that a frank dissemination of sexual knowledge among youths is beneficial. Quite the contrary. It is growth towards the super-sexual life and the realised charm of pure spiritual life that will redeem young minds and lead them up to sturdy and noble manhood. This is the only effective and healthy check to the ebullition of sexual emotions that overwhelm youths on adolescence and a most reliable guide to sane thought and behaviour. This is *our* answer to the youths of the West,—Brahmacharya—continence and chastity, mental and physical. Youths trained in Brahmacharya, on entering matrimonial life, will be noble citizens, endowed with healthy body and mind and a healthy outlook of life. Such householders lived in millions in India in better days and live even now in less numbers. And such again are our dream. The Brahmacharya institution for boys and girls, to be real and effective, must have as its support and background the chaste life of householders. Without chaste men and women in large numbers in society, boys and girls cannot grow into true Brahmacharins. It is futile to expect to grow the delicate flower of Brahmacharya in the noxious atmosphere of general sex-indulgence. Even the householder's life must assume the monastic aspect to a certain extent. Sex-consciousness must be eradicated as much as possible. And that is what our ancients did.

What would our countrymen have, Judge Lindsey's companionate marriage or Brahmacharya? If Brahmacharya, then they must ruthlessly break the dream of easy life, and forego the charms of platonic love which is being paraded in our provincial literatures as a delectable prospect. We must set our face against any scheme that looks upon woman as anything else than mother or spirit and revels in the twilight of refined sexuality. There is no half-way house. Either strict sexual morality or sexual license. Any lowering of the ideal of chastity will gradually lead to those problems with which the



West is now faced. Does India want that? If not, then India must discountenance all sex-experiments.

The supreme necessity of chastity becomes at once apparent when we seriously take to spiritual life. It is foolish to hope to indulge the cravings of the flesh and at the same time enjoy the bliss of the spirit. They are as opposed to each other as darkness and light. Continuous Brahmacharya is absolutely necessary before any substantial spiritual progress is possible. One reason is quite obvious. The tremendous strain that is caused by meditation on God and other spiritual exercises cannot be borne by a cerebro-nervous system which is impaired by sexual thought and indulgence. The brain and nerves of one who is not continent, however healthy and strong one may look outwardly, are incapable of sustaining deep spiritual fervour. He may progress to a certain extent, but beyond that he will find himself helpless.

But this physiological reason is only secondary. The primary reason is psychological. Spiritual realisation in its highest aspects is the realisation of oneself as pure spirit beyond body and mind. It is, in the subjective aspect, the transcendence of body and mind-consciousness, and in the objective aspect, the perception of God face to face and of the universe as God himself. These are two aspects of the same realisation. As our mental discipline progresses, our perception of our own self on the one hand and of the world on the other undergo simultaneous changes. We begin to feel ourselves more and more as spirit and the world also more and more Divine. Along with the progress of the mind, another change also occurs,—the change in our activity and physical functions. We may therefore look upon spiritual progress as a fourfold change—change in the mind, in bodily functions, in self-consciousness and in the objective realities. Spiritual progress, again, from our present 'normal' state upto the realisation of the Absolute may be conveniently divided into three stages.

Now if we observe the fourfold changes that come about in those stages, the absolute necessity of chastity in spiritual life will become at once apparent.

In the *first* or normal stage, our mind is full of desires of the flesh. We crave the joys of the body. We eagerly seek earthly riches and power. The mind is the playground of various carnal passions, worldly ambitions, avarice, jealousy, hatred, egotism, desire for name and fame, etc. Of physical functions, sexual gratification seems the most delectable. The mind dwells in the pelvic region. The pelvic nerve and plexus and also the hypogastric and solar plexuses are then most active and sensitive and hold the mind entangled in their meshes, refusing it any higher conscious experience. We feel ourselves



mainly as body and mind and very little as spirit. And the world outside seems to be an aggregate of unrelated and discrete material and biological phenomena,—the vast higher realities are to us unknown and non-existent. When through self-control we reach the *next* stage, the mind has become purified of many passions ; it is now free of ambition, jealousy, desire for earthly power and enjoyment of the body. We have visions of supernatural light. The mind avoids worldly concerns and finds delight in the contemplation of spiritual realities. Bodily functions also are purified. We are averse to sexual indulgence. Desire for delectable food diminishes and for other physical comforts and luxuries. We prefer mental activity to physical activity. The mind has shifted its centre of gravity from the lower pelvic regions to the region of the heart. It has freed itself from the meshes of the lower plexuses, especially of the pelvic nerve and plexus, and has its citadel now in the cardiac plexus. The sensations of the lower nerves do not easily drag it down. We feel ourselves as something finer than body and mind. We catch a glimpse of our spiritual self. The bodily life, the so-called normal life, does not seem as real as before and its appetites become much weaker. The objective world also has undergone a change. Objects are no longer unrelated, separate entities. They seem all grounded on a unity which interpenetrates them and is their very essence. And on some rare occasions, the consciousness of this unity becomes so clear and profound that phenomena seem like so many moulds containing and formulating a vast, infinite reality much more intimate and intense than our normal consciousness of reality : the whole world seems a collection of forms and insignificant, while behind them looms a spiritual reality profound and infinite, and the mind tends of itself towards that reality. But sexual consciousness is not yet gone. In fact it has become much more subtle and powerful and has to be strenuously fought against. It reveals itself in fine and insidious forms and we come to know in what unthought-of, subtle ways it spreads its snare on the human mind. The physical part is the least of it. The desire for anything feminine is found to have its root in the sexual instinct. But the mind is now in closer grip with it and can fight it to better effect. There are occasional sexual lapses, and those are hours of bitter agony to the soul. Any such lapse in either mental or physical form clouds the limpid vision of the Spiritual on which the mind now dwells avidly ; the nerves seem disturbed and it takes sometime before the unclouded vision is regained. And thus the soul comes to dread the very shadow of anything sexual. *The further we go from sexual consciousness, the nearer we approach spirituality.* Then by and by we travel towards the *third and last* stage, the end of our journey. As we approach it, the mind becomes purer and



purser and is cleared of all worldly taints. The sexual impulse, even in its subtle forms, is now destroyed. Even sex-consciousness departs. We feel ourselves more and more as spirit and sometimes entirely transcend the sense of mind and body. Our external efforts are all gone. Physical functions are limited to mere preservation of the body. Sexual action is absolutely out of question. Even the shadow of sexual thought is agonising. The mind becomes very fine, without a ripple of thought and dwells in uninterrupted rapture on the effulgent vision of the Divine. The soul is full of bliss, peace and love. The world of forms seem a distant speck on the rim of the mind's horizon, and only God abides within and without ourselves. Thus gradually we transcend all limitations of thought and reality and become one with the Absolute. Here the journey ends.

If such is the fact of man's spiritual development, what is the place of sex-life in it? Does it require to be told that without its control and elimination no progress is possible beyond the first stage? What to speak of sex-action, even sex-thought is impossible if we would dwell undisturbed on the second stage. A fool indeed, a miserable fool is he who dreams of attaining Self-realisation and yet holds on to sex-life. Sex-life is, as we have seen, the concomitant of worldly life and physical consciousness. These are aspects of the same state of being. The mind that is addicted to sexual thought and practice is tightly held down to the pelvic region. Such a mind can *never* have the vision of the higher realities. Any exercise, either by thought or action, of the pelvic nerves means the loss and vanishing of the higher vision. We *must* give up sexual life, if we are to realise the spirit. *There is no other way.*

It is human nature to seek easy paths of progress and compromise ideals. This age is specially unfortunate in its lack of faith in spiritual ideals. It does not value chastity because it does not sincerely seek spiritual life and reality. It is satisfied with the normal, that is to say, predominantly animal, life venerated over with a thin intellectualism. But such degradation of life's ideals has brought down its own nemesis. The tangle of sex-life and its necessary effect on domestic and social life have assumed formidable proportions. Facile paths of escape are being sought. But we do not see any redemption for the West unless it accepts the ideal of chastity, which however it will not do until it has remodelled itself on a spiritual plan. Meanwhile we marvel at the serpentine ingenuity with which some Indian pedants are trying to reconcile spiritual idealism with a refined enjoyment of the flesh.\*

\* ERRATA : October P.B.—page 436, line 2, for 63 read about 61; page 440, line 17, for *promient* read *prominent*; page 443, line 13, for *questionnal* read *questioned*; page 444, line 8, for *it* read *them*; and page 448, line 43, for *severely* read *surely*.



# THE SONG OF THE OTHER CHILDREN

BY NINA MACDONALD

O Ramakrishna . . . Master . . .  
We, Thy children of the West, salute Thee!  
On this, Thy natal day, with reverent hearts we come, to  
lay at Thy dear feet the offerings of our love.

\*

Thy natal day . . . . .  
What far-flung visions from the deeps of time those simple  
words evoke.  
Precious the thoughts that come on silent wing,  
Bearing a throng of re-born memories.

Methinks I see Thy tender, loving mother  
Brooding again o'er Thee, a tiny babe,  
Soft, helpless, dimpled, sweet—  
Yet in Thy deep dark eyes what arcane secrets of the universe!

Ah blessed mother!  
What rapturous privilege was thine—  
To cradle in thy loving arms,  
To comfort, nurture, shelter  
Secure from every harm  
The infant body of Thy Lord!

On wings of love the pictures come. I see  
A little lad, with lovelit eyes and merry laughter,  
Who leads his comrades in their gladsome play;  
Singing, dancing through the fields all the livelong golden  
days; . . . .  
Or, quite alone, watching, with rapt, entranced vision,  
Shifting shadow, drifting cloud and soaring bird.

Boy tender, compassionate, loving,  
Thoughtful, wise and true . . . .

Near indeed to God were the children—  
The children who played with Thee.

\*

Still drifting the visions, summoned by love's power;  
Blest memories of long-past yesterlives.  
Sometimes they shine out clear as mountain peaks against  
the rising sun;  
Anon misty and indistinct as broken cobwebs fluttering  
in the breeze.



Surely, O Master, we have known Thee long,  
Else why do we envision thus the past ;  
Why doth our inmost being joyous thrill  
In blissful rapture to Thy sacred name?

\*

When Thou, as Rama, walked upon this earth  
Mayhap as grass beneath Thy lotus feet  
Or wayside flow'rets by Thy garment brushed  
Our life did quicken to Thy holy touch—  
That touch, though light as wing of butterfly,  
Forming a tie of love forevermore.

When Thou as Krishna came, Thy love divine  
Drew us to Thee, though naught we knew of why  
Save that it heartened us and cheered us on ;  
Gave strength to meet the duties of the day.  
We were but soul-babes, so we did not know  
Our joy was caused by spark divine in us  
Responding to the Flame Divine in Thee.

\*

Clearer the vision grows. The clouds dissolve  
As mists before the morning sun dispelled.

In gardens by the Ganges' holy stream  
The God-Man stands revealed.  
Rent are the veils of maya ; broken the bonds of karma  
self-imposed.

Lo ! Thou hast shown that all paths lead to the Father ;  
That the earnest seeker will attain to realization, to conscious  
at-one-ment with God.

"As surety sure" hast Thou shown us that the only essential  
is one-pointed devotion in the search for Truth.

Naught else matters—nor race, nor clime, nor caste, nor creed,  
nor prince, nor peasant, nor poverty, nor riches, nor  
ignorance, nor learning.

All these are but outer. Devotion is inner—of the heart.

Whatsoever the path, the soul who follows it in spirit and in  
Truth will surely attain to God-Consciousness.

Breaker of barriers art Thou, showing forth these truths, that  
all who have eyes to see may see, all who have ears to  
hear may hear.

\*

O Ramakrishna, we are among those of whom Thou didst say :  
"Other children have I whose faces I have not seen,



"Whose speech I do not know.

"Far away in other lands do they dwell ;

"But they also are mine and, in the fulness of time they will come to me."

\*

O Master, long have we waited in this far-off land  
On the western rim of the Western World  
By the shores of the Western Sea.  
Yea, long have we waited, dear Master.

Waiting, waiting, waiting—hungering and thirsting for Thee,  
though in this present life we knew not of Thee as Thou  
didst come again to the children of men.

But, at last, by devious ways and over weary paths, our  
wandering feet brought us to one of Thy devoted children  
who have come in Thy name to bring to the Western World  
Thy message of Love and Liberation, of Soul-Freedom and  
God-Consciousness.

We have been shown that the Pearl of Great Price which we  
seek is within ourselves, because we are one with Thee  
and Thou art one with the Father.

The veil which separates us from Thee is a veil of illusion only.

By Thy life here among men didst Thou show how to pierce  
this veil and to become consciously one with God, the  
Father-Mother of all the myriads of manifested Universes.

\*

And so, O Ramakrishna, Master,

We, thine other children, thy children of the West, beside thy  
children of the East, salute Thee!

On this, Thy natal day, with thankful and reverent hearts we  
come to lay at Thy dear feet the offerings of our love.

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TACOMA,

State of Washington, U. S. A.

March 5th, 1927.

The Ninety-first Anniversary of the Master's Birthday.





## THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN MYSTICISM UP TO THE AGE OF JNANESVARA

BY PROF. R. D. RANADE, M.A.

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(Concluded from the last issue)

### THE TRUE NATURE OF THE RELATION OF THE GOPIS TO KRISHNA

There has been no greater misunderstanding than that about the spiritual nature of Krishna, and his relation to the Gopis. It has been supposed that the Gopis were filled with sexual passion for Krishna ; that he primarily satisfied only the sexual instincts of these Gopis ; that this satisfaction was later given a spiritual turn ; and that therefore the true nature of Krishna's spirituality and his relation to the Gopis is at bottom sexual. There can be no greater absurdity, or no greater calumny, than is implied in such a view. That eroticism has got anything to do with spiritualism we utterly deny. It is impossible to see in the sexual relation of man to woman, or of woman to man, any iota of the true nature of spiritual life. When Catherine of Sienna and mystics of her type wanted to marry God, when Mirabai and Kanhopatra in later times wedded themselves to God, when Andal the female Tamil mystic tried to espouse God, it has been supposed, the erotic instinct implied in such attempts was a partial manifestation of their spiritual love to God. This is an entire calumny on, and a shame to, the true nature of spiritual life. Spirituality is gained not by making common cause with sexuality, but by rising superior to it. That Krishna ever had any sexual relation with the Gopis is hard to imagine. It is a lie invented by later mythologists, who did not understand the true nature of spiritual life. Hence Parikshit's query, as well as Suka's justification, about the true nature of Krishna are alike illustrations of the *ignoratio elenchi*. Parikshit truly objects to the holiness of Krishna, if his sexuality were to be a fact ; but the answers which Suka gives or is made to give, fall entirely wide of the mark. To Parikshit's question why Krishna committed adultery, Suka gives futile answers. He tells us, in the first place, that all the great gods have committed adultery, thus trying to exonerate Krishna from the supposed sin. Secondly, he tells us that fire burns all impurities, and that Krishna's true nature burnt away all sins if he had committed any. Thirdly, he tells us that God must be regarded as being beyond both sin and merit, and that therefore the motive of Krishna was beyond the suspicion of being either meritorious or sinful. Fourthly, he tries to tell us that the conduct of great men need not tally with their words, and thus Krishna's superior teaching was



left unaffected by his practice. Fifthly, he tells us that the actions of a man are all of them results of his *Karman*, and that probably the sexual dalliances of Krishna were the result of his previous *Karman*. Sixthly, he tries to exculpate Krishna by saying that by his divine nature he was immanent both in the Gopis as well as their husbands, and that therefore there was no taint of adultery in his actions. His seventh argument is still more interesting. He tells us that Krishna by his *Maya* produced doubles of these Gopis before their husbands, and that therefore there was no objection to his enjoying the original Gopis!—an argument which is foolish on its face, telling us as it does, that God tries to exonerate Himself from His sins by a magical sleight-of-hand. All these arguments are either childish or irrelevant. The only argument of any value that has been advanced to describe the real nature of the relation of the Gopis to Krishna is the psychological argument that that relation was only an allegorical representation of the relation of the senses to the Self, thus making it evident that any cult of devotion that may be raised upon the sexual nature of the relation of Krishna to the Gopis may be raised only on stubble. Finally, we may advance also a mystical explanation of the way in which the Gopis may be supposed to have enjoyed Krishna. May it not be possible, that, in their mystical realisation, each of the Gopis had the vision of the Godhead before her, and that God so divided Himself before all of them, that He seemed to be enjoyed by each and all at the same time? It is granted to women as to men to have a mystical enjoyment of God, and it is as meaningless to speak of God as the bridegroom of a female devotee, as to speak of Him as the bride of a male devotee. There are no sexual relations possible with God, and Eroticism has no place in Mysticism.

#### THE SANDILYA SUTRA AND THE NARADA SUTRA

The Sandilya and the Narada Bhakti Sutras are, as we have observed, like the Bhagavata, fundamental works of Bhagavata mysticism. It is not very easy to determine the exact dates of composition of these Sutras. The Sandilya Bhakti Sutra seems to be older on account of its archaic tone, and is evidently modelled after the pattern of the great philosophical Sutras. If any internal evidence is of any avail, we may say that even that points to the anteriority of the Sandilya Sutra. The Narada Bhakti Sutra quotes Sandilya, but the Sandilya does not quote Narada. In point of content, however, the Narada Bhakti Sutra surpasses not merely the Sandilya Sutra by its easy eloquence and fervid devotion; but it may even be regarded as one of the best specimens of Bhakti literature that have ever been written. The Sandilya Sutra is more



philosophic than the Narada Sutra. It goes into the question of the nature of Brahman and Jiva, their inter-relation, the question of Creation, and so on. The Narada Bhakti Sutra takes a leap immediately into the doctrine of devotion, analyses its various aspects, and sets a ban against mere philosophical constructions. Both the Sandilya and the Narada quote the Bhagavadgita freely, and in that respect supply us with the connecting link between the Bhagavadgita on the one hand and the later Bhakti literature on the other. So far as the teaching of devotion is concerned, we cannot say that there is much distinction between the Sandilya Bhakti Sutra and the Narada Bhakti Sutra. The two are on a par, so far as that doctrine is inculcated. Over and above the general contents of the doctrine of devotion as inculcated in the Narada, the Sandilya, however, teaches that Bhakti may be of two kinds—primary and secondary. Secondary Bhakti concerns itself with Ritualism, with Kirtana, with Dhyana, with Puja, and even with Namasmarana. Primary Bhakti, on the other hand, means the upspringing of the pure fount of love in man to God. When we once taste this, nothing else matters; but if we have only secondary devotion, we cannot be supposed to have known the nature of Supreme Devotion.

#### THE TEACHINGS OF THE NARADA BHAKTI SUTRA

The Narada Bhakti Sutra begins by defining what Bhakti is. (1) It places on record various definitions of Bhakti advanced by its predecessors, and then gives us what its own definition of Bhakti is. According to Parasara, we are told, Bhakti consists in the worship of God. According to Garga, it consists of the narration of God's exploits. According to Sandilya, so Narada tells us, Bhakti means meditation on the Self. While Narada himself holds that Bhakti is the highest love for God, a whole-hearted attachment to God and indifference to other things, a surrender of all actions to God, and agony in His forgetfulness. As a matter of fact, however, love's nature, says Narada, is indescribable. As a dumb man who eats sugar cannot tell us of its sweetness, so a man who enjoys the highest fruits of Bhakti cannot describe in words their real nature. (2) Then Narada goes on to discuss the relation of Bhakti to other Ways to God. Between Jnana and Bhakti three sorts of opinions are possible. In the first place, it may be maintained that Bhakti is a means to Jnana, as the Advaitists maintain. Others may maintain that Jnana and Bhakti are independent and equally useful ways to reach God. And thirdly, it may be maintained that Jnana is a means to Bhakti, an opinion which Narada himself endorses. To him Bhakti is not merely the end of all Jnana, but the end of all Karman, and the end of all Yoga. In fact, Bhakti



should be regarded as an end in itself. It concerns itself with a personal God who likes the humble and hates the boastful. There are no distinctions of caste or learning, or family, or wealth, or action, possible in Bhakti. (3) Then Narada goes on to discuss the means to the attainment of Bhakti. What, according to Narada, are the moral requirements of a man who wishes to be a Bhakta? He should, in the first place, leave all enjoyments, leave all contact with objects of sense, incessantly meditate on God without wasting a single minute, and always hear of God's qualities. He should give himself up to the study of the Bhakti-sastras and should not waste words in vain. He should pray for the grace of the Saints and the grace of God; and God will appear and bestow upon him spiritual experience in course of time, which Narada thinks, can be attained only by God's grace. He should spend his life in serving the good. He should live in solitude, should care not for his livelihood, should not hear of women, should not think about wealth, should not associate with thieves. Hypocrisy and arrogance, he should shun as foul dirt. He should cultivate the virtues of non-injury, truth, purity, compassion, and belief in God. He should deliberately set himself to transform his natural emotions, and make them divine. Passion and anger and egoism, he should transform and utilise in the service of God. In fact, a divine transformation of all the natural emotions must take place in him. He should not give himself up to argumentation; for there is no end to argumentation. It is manifold and cannot be bridled. The devotee should be careless of the censure of others, and should have no anxiety whatsoever while he meditates. (4) Then Narada goes on to tell us the various kinds of Bhakti. Firstly, he divides Bhakti into Sattvika, Rajasa and Tamasa. He draws upon the three categories of the Bhaktas as given in the Bhagavadgita, namely the Arta, the Jijnasu, and the Artharthin, and tells us that the Arta possesses the Sattvika Bhakti, the Jijnasu the Rajasa Bhakti, and the Artharthin the Tamasa Bhakti, and tells us that the first is superior to the second, and the second superior to the third. One does not know why the Bhakti of the Arta should be regarded as superior to the Bhakti of the Jijnasu. Why should we not regard the Bhakti of the Jijnasu as Sattvika, and the Bhakti of the Arta as Rajasa? Narada has no answer to give. There is yet again another classification of the kinds of Bhakti which Narada makes. He says, it is of eleven kinds. It consists of singing the qualities of God, a desire to see His form, worshipping the image of God, meditation on Him, the services of God, friendship with God, affection towards God, love to God as to a husband, surrender of one's own self to God, at-one-ment with God, and the agony of separation from God. (5) As regards the criterion of Bhakti,



Narada teaches that it is "Svayampramana"; the criterion of Bhakti is in itself. Complete peace and complete happiness are its characteristics. "Anubhava" which is the practical index of Bhakti should increase from moment to moment. It ought to be permanent. It ought to be subtle. While, the psycho-physical characteristics of Bhakti are, that it should make the throat choked with love, should make the hair stand on end, should compel divine tears from meditating eyes. When, therefore, complete happiness and peace are enjoyed, when "Anubhava" is attained, when all the psycho-physical effects are experienced, then alone is true Bhakti generated. They are the criteria of Bhakti. (6) Finally, Narada tells us what the effects of Bhakti are. It is Bhakti alone which leads to true immortality. It is Bhakti which endows us with complete satisfaction. Bhakti drives away all desires from us. A Bhakta uplifts not merely himself, but others also. He ceases to grieve; he ceases to hate; he feels no enjoyment in other things; he feels no enthusiasm for other things; he becomes intoxicated with love; he remains silent.

#### THE PHILOSOPHIC SCHOOLS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON HINDI, BENGALI AND GUJERATI MYSTICISM

We have hitherto considered two movements, one the Occult, the other the Mystic, which ran side by side with each other from the early centuries of the Christian era to almost the end of the first Millennium. *Pari Passu* with these, there was yet a third movement, a movement which we may call the Philosophic movement. There are four great representatives of this movement, namely, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva and Vallabha. Shankaracharya's system is supposed to be antagonistic to the Bhakti movement, and, to that extent, unmystical. But it must be remembered that Sankara did not neglect Bhakti, but absorbed it into his absolutistic schemes. If Sankara's movement is not mystical in its aim, we do not understand what it is. Ramanuja, Madhva and Vallabha, who founded three great schools of philosophic thought, wielded a great influence even up to the end of the fifteenth century, and may all be said to have gone against the Maya doctrine of Sankara. They made Bhakti the essential element in the Vedantic scheme, and although Vallabha preached a philosophical monism, Ramanuja and Madhva could not understand how theism and pantheism could be reconciled in mysticism. It is just this reconciling tendency of mysticism which has been lost sight of by all dogmatic theorists about theism and pantheism. From the schools of Ramanuja, Madhva and Vallabha, sprang forth great Bhakti movements from the thirteenth century onwards in the various parts of India. It is interesting to note how Ramanuja's influence dwindled in



his birth-land to reappear with greater force in Upper India. Ramananda, who was a philosophical descendant of Ramanuja, quarrelled with his spiritual teacher, and came and settled at Benares. From him three great mystical schools started up: the first, the school of Tulsidas; the second, the school of Kabir; and the third, the school of Nabhaji. Kabir was also influenced by Sufism. Tulsidas was too much obsessed by the mythological story of Rama. Nabhaji made it his business to chronicle the doings of the great Saints in the Hindi language. From the school of Madhva, arose the great Bengali Saint Chaitanya, who was also influenced by his predecessor Saints in Bengal, Chandidasa and Vidyapati. Vallabha exercised a great influence in Gujerat, and Mirabai and Narasi Mehata sprang up under the influence of his teachings. We thus see how from the Philosophical Schools, there arose a Democratical Mysticism which laid stress upon the vernaculars as the media of mystical teaching, as opposed to the classical mysticism of ancient times which had Sanskrit as its language of communication. It was also a democratisation not merely in the language but also in the spirit of teaching, and we see how mysticism became the property of all. It is thus evident how the mystical literature in Hindi, Bengali and Gujerati was influenced by the three great schools of Ramanuja, Madhva and Vallabha respectively.

#### CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE ON THE BHAKTI DOCTRINE?

We must pause here for a while to consider the question of Christian influence on the development of the Bhakti doctrine in India. Opinions have greatly differed on this subject. According to one opinion, the Indian doctrine of Bhakti is entirely foreign in its origin; the Indians, according to this opinion, are incapable of Bhakti, and what devotion they came to possess was from the start due to the influence from other lands. A second theory would hold that even though the doctrine of Bhakti in its origin may not be supposed to be un-Indian, its later development was influenced among other things by the worship of the Child-God and the Sucking-Mother, and thus, it must be supposed to have been mainly influenced by Christianity; Ramanuja and Madhva, according to this theory, are supposed to have been influenced by Christian doctrine and practice, especially because in their native places, it is presumed, there was a great deal of Christian influence. According to a third view, the Indian doctrine of Bhakti is entirely Indian, and it does not allow that either Ramanuja or Madhva were influenced by Christian doctrine, far less that the Bhakti doctrine was Christian in its origin; but this view would not deny the possibility, as in the twentieth century to-day, of both Hinduism and Christianity influencing



each other under certain conditions, both in doctrine and practice. It would suppose that their identical teaching on such important subjects as the value of the Spiritual Teacher, the Significance of God's Name, the conflict of Faith and Works or of Predestination and Grace, are due entirely to their development from within and to no influence from without. It does not allow that because Siladitya, the king of Kanauj, received a party of Syrian Christians in 639 A.D., or even because Akbar received Jesuit missions during his reign, that Christianity influenced the course of thought either of Kabir or of Tulsidas. This would be quite as impossible as to suppose that Jñanesvara himself was influenced by Christianity, simply on the ground, as has been occasionally asserted, that the expression "Vaikunthiche Raiiva" occurs in his writings, or that Tukaram was likewise influenced by Christianity by his insistence on the power of sin in man. The feeling of devotion is present in a more or less pronounced fashion throughout all the stages of the progress of humanity from its cradle onwards, and it shall so exist as long as humanity lasts. On this view, we can argue for the early upspringing of the devotional sentiment in all races from within themselves, even though some influence of a kind may not be denied when religious communities mingle together, especially when they have a long contact with each other, a sympathetic imagination, and a genuine desire to learn and to assimilate.

#### TAMIL MYSTICISM

That the Christian influence has nothing to do with Tamil Mysticism from its origin, one has merely to open his eyes to discern. Both the Tamil Saivites and Vaishnavites who lived centuries before the age of Ramanuja, show an utterly innate tendency to Devotion, uninfluenced by any foreign thought or practice. The Tamil Saivites seem to have been established in the country in the 6th century A.D., and through a long line of mystics illustrate the inward impulse which rises from man to God. The great lights of Tamil Saivite literature are Tirujnanasambandar, who flourished in the seventh century A.D., Appar who flourished in the same century, Tirumular who flourished in the eighth century, and finally Manikkavachagar, the man of golden utterances, who flourished in the ninth, and who, in fact may be said to top the list of the Saivite mystics. In him we see the upspringing of a natural devotion to God, which through a consciousness of his faults, rises by gradations to the apprehension of the Godhead. In his great poem, he makes us aware, as Dr. Carpenter puts it, of his first joy and exaltation, his subsequent waverings, his later despondencies, his consciousness of faults, his intensive shame, and his final recovery and triumph. The Tamil



Vaishnavites, who are headed and heralded by the great Alvars, open yet another line of mystical thought, namely of mysticism through devotion to Vishnu. If we set aside the impossible chronologies which are generally assigned to these Alvars, we cannot doubt that they also seem equally established in their country along with the Tamil Saivites in the sixth century. Nammalvar, whose date varies from the eighth to the tenth century in the estimate of critics, has produced works which are revered like the Vedas in the whole Tamil-speaking country. His disciple was Nathamuni, who lived about 1000 A.D., and who was the collector of the famous four thousand hymns of the Alvars. The grand-son of Nathamuni was the famous Yamunacharya who lived about 1050 A.D., and whose lineal philosophical descendant was the great Ramanuja, who lived from 1050 to 1135. Here we have in a brief outline the two great lines of Saivite and Vaishnavite mystics in the Tamil country down to the age of Ramanuja. Ramanuja took up his cue from the Vaishnavite philosophy, and built a system which was intended to cut at the root of both the monistic as well as the dualistic schemes of thought. The predecessors of Ramanuja, however, were given to devotion more than to philosophy, and they showed the pure love of the aspirant for God-realisation, uncontaminated by philosophical thought.

#### CANARESE MYSTICISM

Our praise of these saints, however, cannot be entirely unmitigated, for we know how the Radha-Krishna cult had influenced the songs even of these great Vaishnavite saints. The conception of the relation between the bride and bridegroom as the type of the relation between the Saint and God runs through a great deal of this literature, and to that extent vitiates it. Not so the bold and sturdy Vira-Saiva mysticism, which makes an alliance with Advaitic Monism on the one hand, and Moralistic Purism on the other, and which, even though a large part of it is given to an imaginary discussion of the nature of the various Lingas, which are, so to say, merely symbolical illustrations of certain psychological conceptions, is yet a philosophy which is well worth a careful study. Basava was only a great reformer who lived at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and who was the devotee of the image of Sangamesvara at the place where the Malaprabha and the Krishna meet. He was preceded by a great number of Siddhas, who are as old as the Tamil Alvars on the one hand, and the Hindi Nathas on the other. Nijagunasivayogi who was more of a philosopher than a mystic, Akhandesvara who was more of a moralist than a mystic, and Sarpabhusana who was more of a mystic than either a philosopher or a moralist, are all of them great names in the development of Lingayat thought.



Kanakadas, who stands apart somewhat, having sprung from a low order of the Hindus, and Purandaradas who was a full-fledged Vaishnavite Hindu, must be regarded as supplying us with the development of Vaishnavism in the Karnataka, which went *puri passu* with the development of Virasaiva mysticism.

#### MARATHA MYSTICISM

Our immediate concern in this volume, however, is the consideration of the teachings of the great Maratha saints from the age of Jnanadeva downwards to the age of Ramadasa, beginning in fact from the thirteenth century and ending with the seventeenth,—leaving the consideration of the development of Indian thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the last volume of this History. For fear of increasing the bulk of our present volume to an inordinate extent, we must restrict our attention only to a section of the great mystical community in India, namely, the community of the Maratha Saints. The beginning of the mystical line was effectively made in Maharashtra by Jnanadeva, whose father is supposed to have been a disciple of Sripada Ramananda of Benares, or yet again of Ramananda himself. In that case, it would be very interesting to see how not merely the two streams of Kabir and Tulsidas issued from the fountain-head of Ramananda, but even how Maratha mysticism in a way could be traced to the same fountain. But in any case, it is certain that Nivrittinatha and Jnanadeva came from the spiritual line of the great Gaininatha, as is more than once authentically evidenced by the writings of both Nivritti and Jnanadeva themselves. That Nivrittinatha was instructed by Gaininatha in spiritual knowledge, that Gaininatha derived his spiritual knowledge from Goraksha, and Goraksha from Matsyendra, it is needless to reiterate. The Sampradaya was a Sampradaya of Nathas. When and how Matsyendranatha and Gorakshanatha actually lived and flourished, it is impossible to determine. But it remains clear that they cannot be unhistorical names. Behind Matsyendranatha we have mythology, but after Matsyendra, we have history ; and it is evident that Jnanesvara belonged to that great line of the Nathas, who like the Alvars in the Tamil country and the Siddhas in the Lingayat community, successfully laid the foundation of mysticism in Maharashtra through their great representative, Jnanesvara. It is not without reason that many a later mystic acknowledges that the foundation of that mystical edifice was laid by Jnanesvara, above which Namadeva and other saints later erected the divine sanctuary, of which Tuka became the pinnacle. And while a continuous tradition goes on from Jnanesvara to Namadeva and from Namadeva to Ekanatha and from Ekanatha to Tukaram, Ramadasa like Heraclitus stands



apart in his great spiritual isolation. His is a new Sampradaya altogether: it is not the Sampradaya of the Varkaris. It is for that reason that the Varkaris have looked askance at the great spiritual work of Ramadasa. But we who stand for no Sampradaya whatsoever, and who, like bees, want to collect spiritual honey wherever it is found, recognise, from the mystical point of view, no distinction of any kind between the Sampradaya of the Varkaris or the Sampradaya of the Dharkaris, the Sampradaya of the Cymbal, or the Sampradaya of the Sword. A little after Jñanesvara, but contemporaneously with him, Namadeva, after being tested and found wanting by the potter Gora, entered the spiritual line at the instruction of Visoba Khechar, who was a disciple of Sopana, who was himself the disciple of Nivrīti. Ekanatha was indeed initiated by Janardan Swami, who as rumour would have it, was initiated by the saint Dattatreya himself. But it is to be remembered that Ekanatha, who was the great grandson of Bhanudasa, was a great Varkari of Pandhari, and moreover Ekanatha himself tells us that he derived his spiritual illumination from the line of Jñanesvara. When all these things are taken into account, we cannot say that Ekanatha stands apart from the great spiritual line of Jñanesvara. Tukaram, who is perhaps the most well-known among the Maratha Saints, derives his spiritual lineage from a Chaitanya line. What connection this line had with the Chaitanya school in Bengal has not yet been discovered. But it is at any rate clear that Tukaram developed the Varkari Sampradaya through a repeated study of the works of Jñanesvara, Namadeva, and Ekanatha. Ramadasa probably did not come into contact with any of these people for his initiation, and though, as a tradition would have it, while he was yet a boy, he and his brother were taken to Ekanatha who foresaw in them great spiritual giants, he might yet on the whole be said to have struck off a new path altogether. If we re-classify these great mystics of Maharashtra according to the different types of mysticism illustrated in them, they fall into the following different groups. Jñanesvara is the type of an intellectual mystic; Namadeva heralds the democratic age; Ekanatha synthesises the claims of worldly and spiritual life; Tukaram's mysticism is most personal; while Ramadasa is the type of an active saint. A man may become a saint, and yet, as Monsieur Joly has pointed out, he may retain his original nature. The different types of mystics that we find among the Maratha saints are not a little due to original temperamental differences. Between themselves, these great mystics of Maharashtra have produced a literature, which shall continue to be the wonder of all humanity which cares at all for any expression of mystical thought in any country without distinction of race or caste or creed.



## MOMENTS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA IN AMERICA

BY SWAMI ATULANANDA

(Concluded from the last issue)

I remember quite well an incident in the Ashrama when we were all seated at the dining table. The meal was long over, but no one got up, no one stirred for fear of interrupting the flow of the Swami's words. From his lips came the most sacred, the most sublime truths we had ever listened to.

The Swami spoke of his Master. He told us how, when he saw the Master for the first time, he was reminded of Sukadeva. The Master stepped out from a carriage supported by Hriday, for he was in Samadhi, and staggered like one intoxicated. His face was shining with a divine light, and expressed the great bliss he was enjoying. Then he entered the home of a devotee, and when seated began to sing in a sweet voice and with intense feeling the glory of the Mother Kali.

And later, at Dakshineswar, the Master had taught the Swami to surrender himself to God, rather than count on his own strength. The Swami told us of the Master's great love, and of his childlike simplicity.

"And once," he said in a hushed voice, "our Lord told us that he had other disciples, who spoke a different language, who had different customs, somewhere, far away in the West. 'These also will worship me,' the Master had said, 'these also are Mother's children.' *You* are these disciples," the Swami said, very solemnly, "Mother has revealed it to me."

There was dead silence. We could hardly believe it; we were stirred to the depths of our hearts.

At last one of the students broke the silence. "Swami," she confessed timidly, "I can't believe that I am worthy of such a blessing."

The Swami was visibly moved. First he did not reply. Then with marked excitement he questioned, "Who is worthy? Does God weigh our worthiness? 'The first shall be the last, and the last shall be the first.' I tell you, good or bad, you *are* Mother's child." This student, shortly after, passed away, uttering with her last breath the name of Sri Ramakrishna.

There were at the Ashrama a number of students who had been religious teachers themselves. They taught that diseases could be cured by mental suggestion. They were good people, who lived a pure life. But they had limited ideas, difficult to uproot. The main trouble with them was, the Swami noticed, that they were self-righteous, and hard to teach. They did not



understand the need of renunciation. They believed in health and prosperity, and a good, clean, moral life.

"You are always speaking of being good," the Swami said to them. "That is your highest ideal. We, in India, want Mukti, liberation. You believe in sin, so you want to conquer sin by being good. We believe ignorance to be the great evil, so we want to conquer ignorance with Jnanam, wisdom. And Jnanam is Mukti. 'Know the Truth,' Jesus said, 'and the Truth will make you free.'"

One afternoon in the Shanti Ashrama all the students went with the Swami for a walk. We came to a high hill which we ascended. There seated on the ground under the pine trees the Swami said in the course of conversation, "Mother is very proud and very pure. She wears a heavy veil that none may lift except Her children. When *they* look behind the veil she is happy and smiles."

"What is Mother, and where is She?" a young student asked.

"She is everything and everywhere," the Swami replied. "She permeates nature. She *is* nature. But talk won't do. You must lift the veil."

"How, Swami?"

"Through meditation," the Swami replied.

Then with great emphasis he repeated, "Meditate, meditate, meditate! What are you doing? You are frittering away your life. Think deeply, pray to Mother, go beneath the semblance of things, see the One Reality in all. 'The Lord, (O) Arjuna, dwells in the hearts of all beings. \* \* Verily, this divine *Maya* of Mine is difficult to cross over; those who devote themselves to Me alone, cross over this illusion.' You are a young man; *now* is the time. Don't let this opportunity slip by. Realization is for the young, the strong, the energetic. Have one aim in life, namely, to know Mother. Renounce, renounce, give up the world. There is no liberation without renunciation."

Once, in New York, I could not see the Swami for several days. I had been busy in many ways, till, at last, one afternoon I had leisure, and went to visit him at the Vedanta headquarters.

"Where have you been so long?" he greeted me. "Come, what's the good sitting in the house? Let us go for a walk. I have had no one to walk with all these days."

"That suits me, Swami," I responded. "Put on your heavy coat and boots. It is cold."

It was winter, and the streets were covered with fresh snow. When we came to a wooded place, the Swami was as happy as a child. "What a wonderful sight," he exclaimed,



pointing to the trees, each branch covered with a layer of pure, white snow, glittering in the sunlight. "I love your winters, the air is so exhilarating."

When we came to a large pond, we found boys and girls skating on the ice. Their cheeks were flushed with exercise, and they were calling and shouting, and pursuing each other in great fun.

"That's why you people are so healthy and strong," the Swami called out. "Look at the girls skating with the boys. What freedom! Wish it were so in my country. So innocent and pure! It is a sight for the gods to behold. Come, let's go on the ice. Can you skate?"

"Yes," I said, "I love skating. Every one in Holland skates."

The ice was slippery, and the Swami had difficulty in keeping his balance. But he enjoyed it immensely.

On our way home he talked about India, her poverty, and the restricted life of her women. "When shall we also be wealthy and free?" he sighed. Then he became cheerful again, and he told me about the customs in India, the different people he had met during his life of wandering, their ways of living, speech and dress; about the pilgrimages and temples, and the Sadhus meditating on the banks of the Ganges.

It was most interesting to me. It all sounded like a story of another world. At last, I remarked, "India is a holy land, indeed. The people there must be better than our people in the West."

At this the Swami smiled, and said, "Human nature is the same everywhere. But with us everything, except the zenana, is open and exposed. We cannot even keep our natures secret. But you know very nicely how to do that. You all wear masks. When you have pain, you smile; when you are poor you buy a few cheap tinsels to appear rich; when you are in misery, you say, 'Everything is fine;' when you are not feeling well, you say, 'Never felt better.' We don't do that." Then he laughed heartily.

"You know what is the reason?"

"It is because we don't want sympathy," I said loftily.

"That's pride," the Swami flashed at me. "You like to give sympathy, but not to receive it. You like to be helpful to others, but you don't allow others to be helpful to you. Life should be a matter of give and take. Be ready to give, and equally ready to receive, but without attachment in either case. Then there will be no pride, no self-sufficiency. We cannot stand alone in this world, we are all interdependent."

"Of course," I interposed, "I was speaking of sympathy that is futile. Real, helpful sympathy we all crave. But there



has been in the past too much of sentimental, meaningless sympathy that does no good, but degenerates."

"Yes, yes," the Swami admitted eagerly in a changed mood. "The new psychology of the West has brought a reaction. You are now beginning to understand the power of thought which our Rishis taught ages ago. Thinking about our misfortunes only increases the gloom. Your attitude is to scorn failure, and push onward to success. That is laudable. I like your cheerful, hopeful outlook on life. You use failure as a stepping-stone to success. Down to-day, up to-morrow."

Then placing his hand on my shoulder, he said, "That is manliness, that is strength. We need that in our country."

After a short silence the Swami resumed, "But what I had in mind is this, we live outdoors. Those things which you hide so carefully between four walls and a roof, we couldn't hide if we wanted to. The majority of our people are poor, and live in huts. So they are out in the open most of the time. You cannot hide much when you live many together in a poor hut. And our better homes, on account of the hot climate, are open too. There is no waiting outside the house till some one answers the bell, unlocks the door, and admits you. We bathe, cook and eat our meals, sleep, pray and work, all in the open. Even our shops are open. And we go almost naked.

"You, on the other hand, live in a cold climate, in a wealthy country. So first you hide your body with clothing; your clothed body you hide between four walls; within these four walls each one has his private room where no one ventures without knocking and getting permission to enter; finally your house is hidden in a garden, and the garden hidden by a wall.

"Privacy is your ideal. We have no privacy, all this reflects in your nature. That is the last thing to hide, and you do it." Then we both laughed and talked about other things.

But before we reached home the Swami warned me, "Don't think that all Hindus are saints. Neither are we quite as bad as some of your missionaries tell you. It is simply a matter of nature adjusting itself to conditions. Some of our manners seem barbarous to you, and some of your manners are obnoxious to us. We are always hasty in our judgment of other nations. If we would patiently try to understand the reason for certain customs we would be more charitable in our judgments. Well, well, perhaps some day you will come to India. Then you will see everything."

"Yes, Swami," I said, "I *must* come to India, for Swamiji has said that India is the Karma Bhumi, the land where every soul must come for final liberation."

The Swami smiled, and as we entered the house, said, "We



will see, we will see. Mother knows." When seated in his room, in a thoughtful mood, he softly chanted :

"God's plans, as lilies pure and white, unfold.

We must not tear the close shut leaves apart.

Time will reveal the calyxes of gold."

And now we see how time has revealed and is revealing the calyxes of gold. As the glow of the descending sun lights up the mountain peaks long after the sun itself has set behind the hills, so the works of pure and holy men shed light upon the world long after they themselves have passed away. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

## **DARWIN'S THEORY OF MAN'S DESCENT AS IT STANDS TO-DAY**

(The Presidential Address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Leeds, England, August, 1927)

By PROF. SIR ARTHUR KEITH, M.D., D. SC., LL.D., F.R.S.

In tracing the course of events which led up to our present conception of Man's origin, no place could serve as a historical starting-point so well as Leeds. In this city was fired the first verbal shot of that long and bitter strife which ended in the overthrow of those who defended the Biblical account of Man's creation and in a victory for Darwin. On September 24, 1858—sixty-nine years ago—the British Association assembled in this city just as we do to-night ; Sir Richard Owen, the first anatomist of his age, stood where I now stand. He had prepared a long address, four times the length of the one I propose to read, and surveyed, as he was well qualified to do, the whole realm of Science ; but only those parts which concern Man's origin require our attention now. He cited evidence which suggested a much earlier date for the appearance of man on earth than was sanctioned by Biblical records, but poured scorn on the idea that man was merely a transmuted ape. He declared to the assembled Association that the differences between man and ape were so great that it was necessary, in his opinion, to assign mankind to an altogether separate Order in the Animal Kingdom. As this statement fell from the President's lips there was at least one man in the audience whose spirit of opposition was roused—Thomas Henry Huxley—Owen's young and rising antagonist.

I have picked out Huxley from the audience because it is necessary for the development of my theme, that we should give him our attention for a moment. We know what Huxley's feelings were towards Owen at the date of the Leeds Meeting.



Six months before, he had told his sister that 'an internecine feud rages between Owen and myself,' and on the eve of his departure for Leeds he wrote to Hooker: 'The interesting question arises: shall I have a row with the great O. there?' I am glad to say the Leeds Meeting passed off amicably, but it settled in Huxley's mind what the 'row' was to be about when it came. It was to concern Man's rightful position in the scale of living things.

Two years later, in 1860, when this Association met in Oxford, Owen gave Huxley the opportunity he desired. In the course of a discussion Owen repeated the statement made at Leeds as to Man's separate position, claiming that the human brain had certain structural features never seen in the brain of anthropoid apes. Huxley's reply was a brief and emphatic denial with a promise to produce evidence in due course—which was faithfully kept. This opening passage at arms between our protagonists was followed two days later by that spectacular fight—the most memorable in the history of our Association—in which the Bishop of Oxford, the representative of Owen and of Orthodoxy, left his scalp in Huxley's hands. To make his victory decisive and abiding, Huxley published, early in 1863, 'The Evidences of Man's Place in Nature,' a book which has a very direct bearing on the subject of my discourse. It settled for all time that Man's rightful position is among the Primates, and that as we anatomists weigh evidence, his nearest living kin are the anthropoid apes.

My aim is to make clear to you the foundations on which rest our present-day conception of Man's origin. The address delivered by my predecessor from this chair at the Leeds Meeting of 1858 has given me the opportunity of placing Huxley's fundamental conception of Man's nature in a historical setting. I must now turn to another issue which Sir Richard Owen merely touched upon but which is of supreme interest to us now. He spent the summer in London, just as I have done, writing his address for Leeds and keeping an eye on what was happening at scientific meetings. In his case something really interesting happened. Sir Charles Lyell and Sir Joseph Hooker left with the Linnean Society what appeared to be an ordinary roll of manuscript, but what in reality was a parcel charged with high explosives, prepared by two very innocent-looking men—Alfred Russel Wallace and Charles Darwin. As a matter of honesty it must be admitted that these two men were well aware of the deadly nature of its contents, and knew that if an explosion occurred, Man himself, the crown of creation, could not escape its destructive effects. Owen examined the contents of the parcel and came to the conclusion that they were not dangerous; at least, he manifested no sign of alarm in his Presidential Address. He dismissed both Wallace and Darwin,



particularly Darwin, in the briefest of paragraphs, at the same time citing passages from his own work to prove that the conception of Natural Selection as an evolutionary force was one which he had already recognised.

As I address these words to you I cannot help marvelling over the difference between our outlook to-day and that of the audience which Sir Richard Owen had to face in this city sixty-nine years ago. The vast assemblage which confronted him was convinced, almost without a dissentient, that Man had appeared on earth by a special act of creation ; whereas the audience which I have now the honour of addressing, and that larger congregation which the wonders of wireless bring within the reach of my voice, if not convinced Darwinists are yet prepared to believe, when full proofs are forthcoming, that Man began his career as a humble primate animal, and has reached his present state by the action and reaction of biological forces which have been and are ever at work within his body and brain.

This transformation of outlook on Man's origin is one of the marvels of the nineteenth century, and to see how it was effected we must turn our attention for a little while to the village of Down in the Kentish uplands and note what Charles Darwin was doing on the very day that Sir Richard Owen was delivering his address here in Leeds. He sat in his study struggling with the first chapter of a new book ; but no one foresaw, Owen least of all, that the publication of the completed book, *The Origin of Species*, fifteen months later (1859), was to effect a sweeping revolution in our way of looking at living things and to initiate a new period in human thought—the Darwinian Period—in which we still are. Without knowing it, Darwin was a consummate general. He did not launch his first campaign until he had spent twenty-two years in stocking his arsenal with ample stores of tested and assorted fact. Having won territory with *The Origin of Species*, he immediately set to work to consolidate his gains by the publication in 1868 of another book, *The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication*—a great and valuable treasury of biological observation. Having thus established an advanced base, he moved forwards on his final objective—the problem of Human Beginnings—by the publication of *The Descent of Man* (1871), and that citadel capitulated to him. To make victory doubly certain he issued in the following year—1872—*The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. Many a soldier of truth had attempted this citadel before Darwin's day, but they failed because they had neither his generalship nor his artillery.

Will Darwin's victory endure for all time? Before attempting to answer this question, let us look at what kind of book *The Descent of Man* is. It is a book of history—the history of Man, written in a new way—the way discovered by Charles



**Darwin.** Permit me to illustrate the Darwinian way of writing history. If a history of the modern bicycle had to be written in the orthodox way, then we should search dated records until every stage was found which linked the two-wheeled hobby-horse, bestrode by tall-hatted fashionable men at the beginning of the nineteenth century, to the modern 'jeopardy' which now flashes past us in country lanes. But suppose there were no dated records—only a jumble of antiquated machines stored in the cellar of a museum. We should, in this case, have to adopt Darwin's way of writing history. By an exact and systematic comparison of one machine with another we could infer the relationship of one to another and tell the order of their appearance, but as to the date at which each type appeared and the length of time it remained in fashion, we could say very little. It was by adopting this circumstantial method that Darwin succeeded in writing the history of Man. He gathered historical documents from the body and behaviour of Man and compared them with observations made on the body and behaviour of every animal which showed the least resemblance to Man. He studied all that was known in his day of Man's embryological history and noted resemblances and differences in the corresponding histories of other animals. He took into consideration the manner in which the living tissues of Man react to disease, to drugs, and to environment; he had to account for the existence of diverse races of mankind. By a logical analysis of his facts Darwin reconstructed and wrote a history of Man.

Fifty-six years have come and gone since that history was written; an enormous body of new evidence has poured in upon us. We are now able to fill in many pages which Darwin had perforce to leave blank, and we have found it necessary to alter details in his narrative, but the fundamentals of Darwin's outline of Man's History remain unshaken. Nay, so strong has his position become that I am convinced that it never can be shaken.

Why do I say so confidently that Darwin's position has become impregnable? It is because of what has happened since his death in 1882. Since then we have succeeded in tracing Man by means of his fossil remains and by his stone implements backwards in time to the very beginning of that period of the earth's history to which the name Pleistocene is given. We thus reach a point in history which is distant from us at least 200,000 years, perhaps three times that amount. Nay, we have gone farther, and traced him into the older and longer period which preceded the Pleistocene—the Pliocene. It was in strata laid down by a stream in Java during the latter part of the Pliocene period that Dr. Eugene Dubois found, ten years after Darwin's death, the fossil remains of that remarkable representative of primitive humanity to which he gave the name *Pithecanthropus*, or Ape-man; from Pliocene deposits of East



Anglia Mr. Reid Moir has recovered rude stone implements. If Darwin was right, then as we trace Man backwards in the scale of time he should become more bestial in form—nearer to the ape. That is what we have found. But if we regard *Pithecanthropus* with his small and simple yet human brain as a fair representative of the men of the Pliocene period, then evolution must have proceeded at an unexpectedly rapid rate to culminate to-day in the higher races of Mankind.

The evidence of Man's evolution from an ape-like being, obtained from a study of fossil remains, is definite and irrefutable, but the process has been infinitely more complex than was suspected in Darwin's time. Our older and discarded conception of Man's transformation was depicted in that well-known diagram which showed a single file of skeletons, the gibbon at one end and Man at the other. In our original simplicity we expected, as we traced Man backwards in time, that we should encounter a graded series of fossil forms—a series which would carry him in a straight line towards an anthropoid ancestor. We should never have made this initial mistake if we had remembered that the guide to the world of the past is the world of the present. In our time Man is represented not by one but by many and diverse races—black, brown, yellow, and white; some of these are rapidly expanding, others are as rapidly disappearing. Our searches have shown that in remote times the world was peopled, sparsely it is true, with races showing even a greater diversity than those of to-day, and that already the same process of replacement was at work. To unravel Man's pedigree, we have to thread our way, not along the links of a chain, but through the meshes of a complicated network.

(To be continued)

## THE ESSENCE OF VEDANTA

[VEDANTASARA ]

ईश्वरस्यैयं समष्टिरखिलकारणत्वात् कारणशरीरम् आनन्दप्रचुरत्वात्  
कोशवदाच्छादकत्वात् च आनन्दमयकोशः सर्वोपरमत्वात् सुषुप्तिः अतएव  
स्थूलसूक्ष्मप्रपञ्चलयस्थानम् इति च उच्यते । ३६

39. This aggregate of ignorance associated with Iswara is known as the causal body on account of its being the cause of all, and as the *Anandamayakosha* (the blissful<sup>1</sup> sheath) on account of its being full<sup>2</sup> of bliss and being<sup>3</sup> a cover like a sheath; it is further known as the dreamless sleep<sup>4</sup> (*Susupti*) as it is the resting place of all<sup>5</sup> and, for this reason, it is



designated as the place of ultimate repose of the gross<sup>6</sup> and subtle phenomena.

[This text describes the various designations of ignorance as the preceding text narrated those of Isvara.

<sup>1</sup> *Blissful sheath*—Ignorance covers the soul as it were like the skin covering the body.

<sup>2</sup> *Full of bliss*—This is the characteristic of Atman when it is associated with ignorance.

<sup>3</sup> *Being etc.*—This is the characteristic of ignorance.

<sup>4</sup> *Dreamless sleep*—In this state there is no cognition of gross and subtle objects.

<sup>5</sup> *All*—Such as *Akasha* (sky) etc. At the time of dissolution they find their ultimate resting place in the causal ignorance.

<sup>6</sup> *Gross*—The five elements are of two kinds, gross and subtle. The gross state is said to be formed by taking half of a subtle element and adding  $\frac{1}{4}$ th to it of each of the remaining four; e.g., gross *Akasha* =  $\frac{1}{2}$  subtle *Akasha*, +  $\frac{1}{4}$ th subtle *Vayu*, +  $\frac{1}{4}$ th subtle *Tejas*, +  $\frac{1}{4}$ th subtle *Ap*, +  $\frac{1}{4}$ th subtle *Bhumi*. Then, again, the ether, air, light, water and earth of modern science do not answer to the fine elements of the Hindu Philosophy. *Akasha* is just the sound-producing agency. From *Akasha* rises *Vayu*, having the properties of sound and touch. From *Vayu* springs *Tejas*, possessing the property of visibility as well as those of its predecessors. From *Tejas* rises *Ap*, combining with the above properties its distinctive feature, flavour. *Bhumi* comes from *Ap*, bringing the additional property of smell to its inheritance.]

यथा वनस्य व्यष्टमिप्रायेण वृक्षा इत्यनेकत्वव्यपदेशो यथा वा जलाशयस्य व्यष्टमिप्रायेण जलानीति तथाज्ञानस्य व्यष्टमिप्रायेण तदनेकत्वव्यपदेशः “इन्द्रो मायामिः पुरुरूप ईयते” (ऋग्वेद ६।४७।१८) इत्यादि श्रुतेः। ४०

40. As the forest from<sup>1</sup> the standpoint of the units that compose it signifies trees and hence is designated as many and as a reservoir from the same standpoint denotes a multiplicity of water, so also ignorance when denoting separate units is termed as many; as in such<sup>2</sup> Sruti passages, “Indra<sup>3</sup> through Maya<sup>4</sup> assumes many forms” (Rig Veda, 6-47-18) etc.

[1 *From etc.*—Relating to the diverse forms of ignorance as manifested through various created beings.

<sup>2</sup> *Such etc.*—Comp. “य एको जालवान् ईयते” (श्वेतः उपः ३-१)—“The swarar who rules alone by his powers.”

<sup>3</sup> *Indra*—The Supreme Lord.

<sup>4</sup> *Maya*—Projecting power.]



अत्र व्यस्तसमस्तव्यापित्वेन व्यष्टिसमष्टिाव्यपदेशः । ४१

41. Ignorance has been designated collective and discrete on account of its pervading the aggregate<sup>1</sup> and the units.<sup>3</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> *Aggregate*—Such as a lump of clay.

<sup>2</sup> *Units*—Such as pots made of that clay.]

इयं व्यष्टिनिष्ठोपाधितया मलिनसत्त्वप्रधाना । ४२

42. This unit of ignorance on account of its being the associate of inferior<sup>1</sup> (created being) has the preponderance of impure<sup>2</sup> substance.

[<sup>1</sup> *Inferior*—In contradistinction to Iswara, Jiva has more of ignorance.

<sup>2</sup> *Impure*—The quality of *Sattva* is eclipsed by *Rajas* and *Tamas*.]

एतदुपहितं चैतन्यमल्पशक्तत्वानीश्वरत्वादिगुणकं प्राज्ञ इत्युच्यते  
एकाक्षानावभासकत्वात् । ४३

43. Consciousness, associated with this, has limited knowledge and is devoid of the power of lordship ; it is called *Prājña*<sup>1</sup> on account of its being the illuminator of partial<sup>2</sup> ignorance.

[<sup>1</sup> *Prājña*—It stands for Jiva or Brahman associated with partial ignorance. The *Māndukya Upanishad* describes the three states of *Jiva*, viz., *Viśva* or the waking state, *Taijasha* or the dream state and *Prājña* or the state of dreamless sleep. In the last state the Jiva remains, though temporarily, in a state of unity with Brahman. Beyond these three states is the transcendental state of *Turiya*, when Jiva, free from all ignorance, realises its permanent unity with Brahman.

<sup>2</sup> *Partial ignorance*—As opposed to the aggregate ignorance which is associated with Iswara.]

अस्य प्राज्ञत्वमल्पोपाधितयानतिप्रकाशकत्वात् । ४४

44. The reason for its<sup>1</sup> being called *Prājña* is its indistinct<sup>2</sup> power of illumination on account of the association with impure<sup>3</sup> *Upādhi*.

[<sup>1</sup> *Its*—of the Jiva or the created being.

<sup>2</sup> *Indistinct etc.*—Even in the state of dreamless sleep when the Jiva realises its temporary unity with Brahman, it is not free from past tendencies which remain for the time being in a latent state. Therefore on waking from a dreamless sleep he at once remembers all about his past and establishes his relations with the world accordingly.

<sup>3</sup> *Impure*—As has been said before, there is, in the composition of the Jiva, a preponderance of the inferior qualities of *Rajas* and *Tamas*.]



अस्यापीयमहङ्कारादिकारणत्वात्कारणशरीरमानन्दप्रचुरत्वात्कोश-  
वदाच्छादकत्वाच्चानन्दमयकोशः सर्वोपरमत्वात्सुषुप्तिरतएव स्थूलसूक्ष्म-  
शरीरप्रपञ्चलयस्थानमिति चोच्यते । ४५

45. This unit (Vyasti) of ignorance, associated with it,<sup>1</sup> is as<sup>2</sup> well known as the causal body on account of its being the cause<sup>3</sup> of egoism etc., and as the blissful sheath as it is full of bliss<sup>4</sup> and as it serves the purpose of covering like a sheath ; it is further known as dreamless sleep as it is the resting place of all and for this reason it is also designated as the place of ultimate repose of the gross<sup>5</sup> and subtle phenomena.

[1 It—The Jiva.

2 As well—As is the case with Iswara.

3 Cause etc.—In the dreamless sleep, the Jiva retains the *Samskara* of egoism (I-consciousness) etc.

4 Full etc.—Though the mind is dissociated from the sense-organs and objects, yet it enjoys, in dreamless sleep, great happiness.

5 Gross etc.—In the waking state the Jiva is cognisant of the gross objects. In the dream state the gross composition is dissolved into subtle composition and he recognises only the subtle objects. In dreamless sleep the gross as well as the subtle objects are absorbed into the ultimate cause. Therefore the state of dreamless sleep has been described as the state of ultimate absorption or dissolution.]

## NOTICES OF BOOKS

THE MYSTERIOUS KUNDALINI—by Vasant G. Rele. Published by D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., 190, Hornby Road, Fort, Bombay. Pp. 112 and IV and VIII. Price Rs. 3/8.

"Under the auspices of the Bombay Medical Union, a few days back Deshbandhu.....showed certain phenomena, such as stopping of the radial and temporal pulse on both sides at will and stopping of the heart-beats, for a few seconds..... The gentleman performing these feats does it by Yogic science and Prāṇāyama." Dr. Rele, the author, who saw the exhibition, felt drawn to a scientific study of the real source of this miraculous power, and the result is the book under review, which he read in a shorter form before the Bombay Medical Union in July, last year. The book is foreworded by Sir John Woodroffe and is illustrated by photographs and diagrams.

The author's conclusion is that "all physical practices of Kundali Yoga are..... for the development of control over the autonomic nervous system over which we have normally no control. The six chakras in the Yogic literature, which, when controlled, gave wonderful powers to a Yogi, are nothing but six important plexuses of the



sympathetic portion of the autonomic nervous system; and the Shakti (power) or Kundalini, which pierced these chakras, i.e. formed connections with them, according to my version of it, is the Vagus nerve in the body. Normally, the Kundalini is doing her usual work unconsciously and is said to be lying dormant amongst us, and to establish a conscious control over this Kundalini is an important step in the achievement of Yoga."

We have carefully considered the author's thesis, but we regret we cannot accept it whole-sale. The author's identification of Kundalini with Vagus nerve is supported by a twofold argument. Physiologically, he finds certain peculiarities in that nerve which lead him to conclude that the powers of performing Yogic miracles are derived from it. Scripturally, he discovers a striking similarity between the Vagus nerve and the descriptions of Kundalini given in Tantrik books. We are no judge of the physiological basis of his argument;—its estimation must be left to expert physiologists. But of the other, namely, the scriptural basis, we may say that Dr. Rele has failed to appreciate a central fact regarding Kundalini, to which Sir John Woodroffe makes reference in his Foreword. He truly remarks: "As to this I would say that Kundalini Herself cannot be that and for this reason: She is the Grand Potential. As such She cannot, in my view, be identified with any of the products which She becomes..... She is then not as such, in my view, a Nerve or any other physical substance or mental faculty but the ground substance of both which, on being roused, ascends and is merged in the higher Tattvas ending in Shiva-Shakti Tattvas when She is said to be merged in Paramashiva." Yogis look upon the Kundalini as a spiritual principle, not as a nerve; and cases have been known in which the Kundalini has been realised actually in the traditional form of a serpent. The author concedes that the writers of the Tantrika treatises possessed expert knowledge of even the intricacies of the nervous system. They certainly knew the Vagus nerve. It is upto the author to enquire why yet they did not clearly mention the Kundilini to be that nerve but described it on the other hand as a spiritual principle.

We cannot speak of Yogic mysteries from our personal experience. But we are aware of the experiences of one in whose evidence we implicitly trust. We refer to Sri Ramakrishna. He testified to having seen the *chakras* or lotuses in superconscious vision. The one immediate conclusion that we arrive at from this is that the *chakras* cannot be material substances. For the description that he gave of the lotuses has no reference to the plexuses as they exist in our body. The writer's identification of the *chakras* with the plexuses therefore falls through.

That does not mean that the author's researches as embodied in the book have been in vain. Though he may have failed to maintain his principal thesis, he is undoubtedly on the track to important discoveries. We are confident that if he proceeds on from the orthodox



view-point, he will find his investigations easier and better crowned with success.

What is the correct view-point? The correct attitude will be to assume a parallelism between the psychic life and its physiological instrument, each reacting on the other. The Yogi's progress must necessarily be through mind and consciousness. But it is dependent to certain extent, in the primary stages at least, on the physiological instrument, esp., the nerves and the brain. Therefore strict continence has been urged on the Sadhaka and such practices as *āsana*, *mudrā*, *prāṇāyama*, etc. have been recommended. Our present consciousness and ordinary perception are closely related to and dependent on our physical system, nerves, brain, etc. Any change in the latter tells also on our consciousness. Thus Patanjali admits that Samadhi may be attained by the use of medicine. From this it must not be understood that higher states of consciousness (high spiritual states) also can be reached through physical action. The Samadhi that is reached through the power of medicine is far from the real Samadhi which is the home of supreme illumination. Only a little knowledge and power can be gained by physical manipulation. The Sadhaka's main help must be mental discipline. It is true that mental evolution has its physical counterpart in that it will induce certain nervous and cerebral changes. That means that whereas the author's conclusion may have much truth in them, they represent only the physiological half. It is quite possible that when the Sadhaka has the realisation of the *chakras* and the *Kundalini* which are spiritual forms, there are simultaneous affection in the plexuses and the Vagus nerve. But that does not mean that the plexuses and the nerve are identical with the *chakras* and the *Kundalini*.

In this connection we may touch upon a popular error regarding Raja or Kundali Yoga. It is generally supposed that if the physical processes prescribed in those Yogas are carefully followed, progress in those Yogas is inevitable. Sir John Woodroffe in his review of Bishop Leadbeater's *The Chakras* in *Prabuddha Bharata* (August) has referred to it. He speaks of a distinction, on this assumption, between the Bhakti, Jnana and Karma Yogas (which are considered to be based on moral victory) and the psycho-physical Yogas. Our books do not seem to have made any such specific distinction. In fact Raja Yoga or Kundali Yoga is also as much grounded on mental and moral discipline as any other Yogas. It is true these Yogas begin with certain physical practices. But these do not dispense with the moral struggle. For as these processes have a direct effect on the brain and the nerves inducing certain changes in them, it is absolutely necessary that the mental counterpart of the brain and nerves also should undergo corresponding changes simultaneously. The nerves and the brain are as it were the junction of the mind and the body. Our modes and habits of thought are intimately related to them. Our body is directly moulded by our thought-life, our *samskaras* and desires. Especially so are the nerves and the brain. A permanent change in either the mind or the



cerebro-nervous system requires a corresponding permanent change in the other. If the brain and the nerves should remain healthy, physiological and psychological changes should be simultaneous. When a Sadhaka, therefore, without changing the mind, induces sudden changes on the nerves and the brain through breath-control and other physical processes, he creates a keen conflict between the body and the mind with very unhappy results. He often contracts serious diseases of the body and the mind. He often runs mad. We have ourselves known several unfortunate cases of serious heart-disease and lunacy as a result of indiscriminate Yogic practices. The Yoga books are therefore particular about certain preliminary moral conditions being fulfilled before the real Yogic practices may be safely begun. The fact is, *all paths to Truth presuppose a hankering for Truth and consequent abnegation of the false desires of the flesh. Kundali Yoga is not an exception.* And one who feels a genuine longing for the knowledge of Truth has his brains and the nervous system unconsciously purified and re-formed so as to safely bear the tremendous strains of continuous, subtle and high thoughts. One may for a time rise to psychic heights even without conscious moral efforts. But if those psychic gains have any *spiritual* value, they cannot last unless there is also moral purification. All higher psychic states are necessarily spiritual. Therefore psychic realisation of any spiritual value is impossible without preliminary moral purity. No, there is no royal road to spiritual experience.

Though we do not find it possible to accept Dr. Rele's conclusions, we sincerely admire his scientific spirit and enthusiasm. He has devoted patient and industrious hours to the study and we hope he will continue it with unabated vigour. We recommend the book to all who are interested in the problem. It will furnish much food for thought and also positive knowledge.

AITAREYA UPANISHAD by Swami Sharvananda. Published by the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 43. Price As. 6.

The series of Upanishads as translated and annotated by Swami Sharvananda does not require further introduction. He has already brought out seven Upanishads and this is the eighth, to be followed by more. Each contains Sanskrit text, paraphrase with word for word literal translation, English rendering and comments. The special characteristic is the Swami's illuminating comments on the texts: they are neither too learned nor too technical, but are designed to bring out the meaning in a form suited to the average understanding. We are not aware of another series on Upanishads which can be more helpful to English-knowing readers.

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## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Suddhananda, the new Secy. of the Order

Swami Suddhananda has been appointed Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. He has been one of the Assistant Secretaries of the Math and Mission for many years and is one of the foremost disciples of Swami Vivekananda. He is held in great love and veneration by the entire Ramakrishna Order for his wonderful charm of character, deep spirituality, profound learning, and above all, for his extremely unsophisticated nature and democratic treatment. It is he who made the excellent Bengali translations of almost all the English works of Swami Vivekananda, and was for many years Editor of the Order's Bengali organ, *Udbodhan*. He was also partly responsible for the starting of the Order's Madras organ, *The Vedanta Kesari*. His discourses and original literary contributions are of a high order. His knowledge of the different centres of the Order and their working, and his intimacy with almost every member of the Order will stand him in good stead in his new capacity. We wish him long years of fruitful service to the Order and to the cause for which it exists.

### Swami Jnaneswarananda

Swami Jnaneswarananda, who was for some years in charge of the Patna Ramakrishna Ashram, started on the 30th September last for New York, where he will work at the Vedanta Centre. The Swami is a fine product of the Ramakrishna Order, and is sure to meet with great success in his new field of activity.

### Mrs. M. C. Funke

Mrs. Mary C. Funke, one of the intimate American disciples of Swami Vivekananda, laid aside her body on the 10th of August this year at 1-50 A.M. in her Detroit home. About her, Sister Christine writes to us :

She was one of the two whom Swami Vivekananda used to refer as "my disciples, who travelled hundreds of miles to find me and they came in the night and in the rain."

Of "M. C. F.," Swamiji said, "She gives me freedom." He was seldom more spontaneous than in her presence.

"She is naïve," he said on another occasion. This amused her, for she did not spare herself in her efforts to meet his moods. Perhaps more than any of us, she realised how much he needed rest and relaxation. The body and mind should not be kept at so great a tension all the time. While others were afraid of losing even a word, she thought of how she could amuse him. She told funny stories, often at her own expense, talked lightly and entertainingly. "She rests me," he said to one. To the same one she said, "I know he thinks I am a fool, but I don't care as long as it amuses him."



Was it because of her attitude of not wanting to gather anything from one who had so much to give that she, most of all, retained the impress of his personality undistorted?

Her sunny disposition, her optimism, her enthusiasm were refreshing. Nor was she less attractive in other ways, for she had beauty, grace and charm to an unusual degree. Even to the last day, in spite of her physical disability, the old charm was still there. Nothing rekindled the flame and brought the fire of enthusiasm to such a glow as conversation about Swamiji. He lived and one actually felt his presence! It is a blessed experience.

Who can doubt that when the time came for her to drop the body which had become such a burden, she found the darkness illumined and in that luminous atmosphere a radiant presence gave her that great gift—*Freedom*?

### Some Reports and Appeals

We had great pleasure in publishing last April an illustrated article on the *Benares R. K. Mission Sevashram*, depicting the impressions of a visitor. From this our readers must have felt that wonderful work is being done by the Sevashram in the service of the poor and the diseased. The Sevashram has sent out an appeal for funds for its recurring expenses and for building Workers' Quarters and an Invalid Home for women, among other things. The recurring expenditure may be safely met if donors will kindly endow beds which require only Rs. 3,000 each. The increasing utility of the Sevashram will be clear from the following figures: In the year 1926, 1,679 cases were treated in its Indoor Hospitals, Refuge Wards, etc., as against 1,150 cases in 1925. And through its outdoor service, relief was given to 22,325 cases as against 18,597 cases in 1925. All help may be sent to *Asst. Secy., R. K. Mission Home of Service, Luxa, Benares City.* . . We have published from time to time reports of the increasing activity of the *Bombay Sri Ramakrishna Ashram*. A General Report (from May 1923 to Dec. 1926) has recently reached us. An important step forward has lately been taken by the amalgamation of the Bombay Western India Vivekananda Society with the Ashram. The Ashram sends out an appeal for Rs. 6,500 for building a Charitable Dispensary and a Free School. Remittances may be sent to *Secy., R. K. Ashram, Khar, Bombay.* . . . The *R. K. Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, (E. I. Ry.) Behar*, is one of the important educational centres of the Mission. The report for the year 1926 records considerable progress. The school was provided with a Home of its own. Two residential blocks with a separate kitchen\* were built and occupied. The number of inmates at the end of the year was 53 as against 46 in 1925. Every care was taken to impart an all-round education—physical intellectual, moral, religious—to the students. The Vidyapith needs Rs. 50,000 to erect more buildings and to equip the institution properly. It also requires a permanent fund. . . . The *Shyamala Tal Charitable Dispensary, (P.O. Deori, via Champawat, Dt. Almora, U. P.)* has been doing silent work



from 1914. The total number of patients treated up to the end of 1926, was 6,488 in the outdoor dispensary and 61 in the indoor hospital. The total receipts during the years were Rs. 658-10-0 and disbursements Rs. 664-15-6. Gifts of medicines were also received. An upper primary school for local hill boys is also being conducted in the same place. Public help in cash or kind will be very much appreciated. . . . The R. K. Mission Sevashram, Habiganj, Sylhet, Assam, in its report of the year 1926 records various interesting activities. It not only holds religious classes and meetings for the benefit of the townspeople and renders intellectual service by having a public library and reading room and granting help to deserving poor students, but it also maintains four night schools for the benefit of especially the cobbler classes in different parts of the sub-division. It also conducts a shoe factory for the benefit of a local cobbler village as well as for the boys' practical training. It renders unstinted service to the diseased and otherwise suffering people. The Sevashram appeals for funds for building a house of its own and also for the upkeep of its growing work. . . . The R. K. Mission Sevashram, P.O., Balliat, Dacca, Bengal is an important rural centre of work. In addition to religious classes and meetings, free library and reading room, a Vivekananda Society mainly for the all-round benefit of the local student community, and a free charitable dispensary and other relief works as occasions arise, the Sevashram has also two schools, one for boys and another for girls to its credit. It earnestly appeals for liberal help from the public for a better carrying out of its work and further developments. . . . Babu Harendranath Chatterji, B.L., Secy., Ramakrishna Library, Puri, Orissa, will thankfully receive any contribution towards the erection of a small building for housing a Library which is being conducted in that holy place for the last two years and evidently doing useful service to many visitors. . . . The activities of the R. K. Mission, Dacca, may be broadly classified under three heads: Missionary, Educational, and Charitable. Under the first head, the Centre during 1926 conducted weekly sittings and scriptural classes, held lectures and discourses and also anniversaries of Saints and Prophets. Its educational work consists of Sri Ramakrishna Free School, Library and Reading Room and Physical culture. Its charitable work has been various: indoor hospital work, relief through outdoor dispensary, cremation, relief of cholera, flood, small-pox, etc., etc. This is the most important centre of the Eastern Bengal and is doing valuable service indeed. . . . The R. K. Mission Anath Ashram Baranagore, 24-Perganas, Bengal, is an orphanage having 22 orphans under its care as the report for the year 1926 shows. It has from a very humble beginning risen to its present state through enormous hardships. The inmates are taught—in addition to theoretical knowledge—spinning, weaving, carpentry, cane work and tailoring. The Ashram appeals for funds for having a house of its own so that its activity may be widened. Besides fulfilling its ostensible purpose, it also renders medical and other helps to the neighbouring public, nurses the sick



and maintains an open library for all. . . . The R. K. Ashram, Malda, Bengal, in its first three years' report which ends with the December of 1926, presents a good catalogue of work done. Its activity has been all-round, physical, intellectual and spiritual. It has done various relief works in the town and villages, conducts three night schools, maintains a free library and dispensary and holds regular scriptural classes for the benefit of the attending devotees. We wish it every success and prosperity. . . . We have also received the reports of *The R. K. Mission Sevashram, Brindaban*, *The R. K. Mission Sevashram, Rangoon*, *The R. K. Students' Home, Bangalore City*, *The Vivekananda Society, Colombo*, and *The Vivekananda Society, Calcutta*.

#### Ramakrishna Mission Flood Relief Work, Orissa and Guzerat.

The Ramakrishna Mission has been carrying on relief work at Hanspot in Dhamnagar Thana, South Balasore since September last and has also opened another centre at Dehurda in Bhograi Thana, North Balasore. The last weekly distribution consisted of 18½ mds. of rice among sufferers belonging to 81 different villages. Total failure of crops has made the situation extremely grave and the relief work will have to be continued for several months. Sufficient funds are therefore necessary to cope with the situation. Our appeal has not yet met with any adequate response. We believe however that the case of the poor sufferers will not fail to receive proper attention from the sympathetic public.

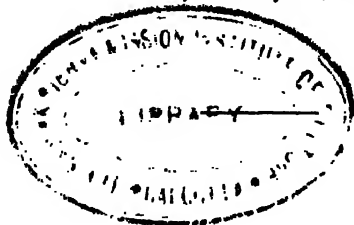
The Mission from its Bombay branch centre at Khar despatched a relief-party to Cambay in July last immediately after the floods in Guzerat. It opened a centre at Tarapur and extended the relief operation as funds permitted. The Mission is at present working in 92 villages from four relief centres over an approximate area of 400 square miles. Besides rice distribution 3849 pieces of cloth have been distributed and food stuff sold at cheap rates. If sufficient funds be forthcoming, re-building of huts will be taken up.

Contribution however small will be thankfully received and acknowledged by

(1) President, Ramakrishna Mission,  
P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.  
or

(2) Manager, Udbodhan,  
1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar,  
Calcutta.

(Sd.) SUDDHANANDA,  
Secy. R. K. Mission.





# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्रायः वराहविवाहः ।

*Katha Upa. I. 44. 14.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE

My first visit to her was at Kothar in Orissa. On that occasion I had the good fortune of saluting her, but not that of any conversation. I returned home the next day. But feeling a strong desire to see her again, I went very soon to Kothar for the second time. After I had stayed there a few days, I went to her one morning and said that I would leave next day. Mother replied: "Stay another day; go day after to-morrow." I returned to the outer apartment. In a short while a monk came to me and said: "Mother is pleased with you; finish your bath and keep yourself ready to-morrow morning." I did not understand what he meant by Mother being pleased and therefore remained silent.

Next morning, Sister Radhu came and asked me: "Who is Vaikuntha Babu? Mother wants him." When I went in to Mother, she said: "Come, come into this room." As I entered, she asked me: "Will you have a *mantram*?"\*

Myself.—If you please. I do not know anything.

Mother.—All right. . Sit here.—Of which God will you have the *mantram*?

Myself.—I do not know anything.

\* A mystic formula, by repeating which one gets spiritual illumination.



Mother.—Well, I think this mantram will suit you.

With this she gave me a mantram and thus initiated me into spiritual life.

It was during these days of my stay with Mother that I asked her if I could have another Guru for learning the practice of Yoga. Mother replied that I might not receive initiation from any other Guru, though I might have Gurus for learning other things.

The night before I left Kothar, some one woke me up at 12 P.M. and said, as he gave me a packet of sweetmeats, "Mother has sent these for you to take to-morrow on your journey. She forbids you to take any bazar refreshments."

Later, I went to see Mother at Kamarpukur. This was my first visit to Kamarpukur, the birth-place of Sri Ramakrishna. During dinner, Mother herself served me. When I finished my meal, she said: "Vaikuntha, clear your glass, cups and leaf. You must not leave them behind in the home of your Guru." By this, she of course meant the home of Sri Ramakrishna. For at Jayrambati, she would often clear the plates and leavings of her disciples herself.

Next morning when I saluted her, she asked me when I would return home. I expressed the desire of visiting the Math at Belur before going home. But Mother insisted that I should go home directly. I said: "Mother, I have come so far,—I do not mean to return home without seeing the Math." "No," she replied, "go home directly. You must not disobey your Guru." After that, of course I could only remain silent; but I thought within myself that as soon as I had left Kamarpukur, I would go to the Math, and then, how would Mother know?.....

An interesting thing happened in the mean time. I had kept my money-bag in a niche in the front-gate of the house, which was a most unlikely place to keep one's purse in. Mother happened to see it there and removed it to a safer place inside the house. I did not know this. A while after, she sent Sister Lakshmi to ask me what I had done with my money-bag. Of course I could not find it in the niche. When this was reported to Mother, she sent for me and said: "How can you succeed in the world, if you are so careless? I do not see how you can be a householder if you are not a little careful. Your purse is with me."

The same noon I was called in and asked to read out some of the letters she had received. The contents of one of them I specially remember. It was written from the Udbodhan Office where Sasi Maharaj (Swami Ramakrishnananda) was at that time lying ill of tuberculosis. The letter said that he wished to see Mother and wanted to be guided in his treatment by her



advice. On hearing this, Mother said: "What can I say about his treatment? He should be guided by the concerted advice of Sarat, Rakhal and Baburam. And if I go there, he will have to be removed. But is that desirable? I won't go. If anything happens to him, I shall find it impossible to live there. Just write a reply clearly explaining my reasons.".....

A brother disciple had sent a letter to Mother through me. As I was going to hand it over to her, she asked me to open and read it. It contained two questions: (1) "I am going to enter a service. Will it prove a spiritual bondage?" (2) "Will marriage be beneficial to me?" In reference to the first question, Mother said: "How can service prove a spiritual entanglement?" As regards the second, she did not vouchsafe any reply, but asked me instead if I had married. When I replied in the negative, she said: "That is very nice. Do not marry. Marriage is a great nuisance."

I myself asked her if the eating of fish and flesh was bad. She said: "Fish-eating is customary in this province. You may take fish."..... I also expressed a desire to have her foot-prints on a piece of cloth. She replied: "That will not be possible here. All do not look upon me in the same way as you do. The Lahas often come here. If I paint my feet to give you prints, I shall have to hide myself when they come."

Next noon, after dinner, I prepared to start. I went in to take leave of Mother. She was preparing betel on the porch of her room. On seeing me, she asked: "Have you made your salutations to Raghuvir?"\* I had not. Mother asked me to salute him making money-offering, and added: "If you are short of money, take from me."..... As I took my leave, Mother blessed me heartily and said: "Go home directly from here. You need not go now to the Math or anywhere else. Go home and serve your parents. It is your duty now to serve your father." This earnest injunction drove away the former resolve from my mind and I went home directly *via* Koalpara. On reaching home, I found my father seriously ill. He had been quite well when I had started for Kamarpukur. He died within a week of my return home.

On one occasion I had a quarrel with one of my brothers over some worldly affair. Wanting to leave home and live separately for some time I went to the Udbodhan Office to inform Mother and seek her permission. I saluted her and remained standing. Mother said to Golap-Ma who was there: "Do you know, Golap, Vaikuntha has hurried so far to me, simply because his elder brother has given him a slap! Do not

\* Raghuvir is the symbolical image of Sri Ramachandra. The image was got by Sri Ramakrishna's father in a miraculous way, was brought home by him and installed there as a household deity.



people quarrel now and then when they live together? Why making so much of a little thing?" "Go home, my child," she said, turning to me, "such occasional quarrels are inevitable when you live in the same family."

On another occasion, I approached her at the same place with a heavy heart and said: "Mother, I have come to tell you something."

"Yes, tell me," she said.

"When will you be gracious to this unhappy child of yours?"

"My child, the Master will bless you,—call on him. Keep good company and practise *sadhana*. Pray to the Master, everything will be all right."

"But that is how I have gained nothing. How can I call on the Master?—I have not seen him. You have been kind to me. If the Master is to be prayed to, then pray to him yourself on my behalf."

"How can you realise without *japa* and meditation? You must practise them."

"No, I do not want to practise them any more. I have so far gained nothing by them. The evil passions, anger, lust and infatuation, are still as strong in me as before. The dirt of the mind has not cleared the least."

"My child, it will clear by and by, by repeating the mantram. You must practise. Don't be wayward. Whenever you find time, repeat the mantram and pray to the Lord."

"No, Mother, I have not the power to do all these. My mind is very restless. Either free my mind of all evil thoughts and fill it with the consciousness of God or take your mantram back. I do not want to cause you unnecessary suffering; for I have heard that if the disciple does not repeat the mantram regularly, the Guru has to suffer for that."

"What ideas these! I am ever anxious for you. And don't you know that the Master has already blessed you?"

With this Mother burst into tears and earnestly said: "All right, you need not repeat the mantram any more." She meant that she would herself repeat it on my behalf. But I understood her wrongly: I thought she wanted to sever her connection with me. I was filled with a great terror and cried out: "Mother, have you really robbed me of my all? What shall I do now? Am I indeed ruined for ever?"

"What!" she replied with great firmness, "my child to be ruined? No, none can ever ruin my children, those who have come to me."

I asked her what I should do henceforth. Mother said: "Rely on me and live in peace. And always remember that



there is one behind you, who will, when the time comes, take you to the Eternal."

I said: "Mother, so long as I stay with you, I feel quite good. Not a single worldly thought assails my mind. But as soon as I return home, all sorts of evil thoughts come into it, I mix with my old bad companions and do bad deeds. However I may try, I cannot shake off those evil thoughts."

Mother replied:—"This is due to the *karmas* of your previous birth. You cannot shake them off all on a sudden. Keep good company; try to be good,—everything will be all right by and by. Pray to the Master. I am ever with you. Know that you are already free, in this very life. Fear not. When the time comes, the Master will do everything for you."

## THE HINDU ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

BY THE EDITOR

We have reproduced Sir Arthur Keith's British Association address on Darwinism in our last and present issues. To many of our Indian readers the address may appear innocent. It does not propound any new theory but only goes over the ground that has been covered by research since Darwin's passing. Yet it has succeeded in creating quite a stir in certain circles in England. Of course genuine evolutionists have to say much against Sir Arthur's verdict. Can Darwin's theories as regards the method of the origin of species be accepted in toto? There are other theories not less weighty than Darwin's, and so far as we are aware, no final conclusion has been arrived at yet. But it is not scientists that have challenged the address. The protest has come from Roman Catholics and Protestants and also from third parties.

We hear sometimes of the claim that Christianity is a specific religion. It is often said that Christianity is *the* religion for the world. Only last May, Dr. Ingram, Bishop of London, returning from a 48,000 miles journey in all parts of the world observed that "Christianity is the one thing that is wanted in the world." The learned Bishop further remarked: "At the present moment there is an overwhelming desire for truth, and I only wish that those who profess themselves to be Christians will live and act according to their belief. This desire for the truth must be faced with courage by Christians and teachers of the Gospel." This is no doubt an admirable attitude. But the ugly incident at St. Paul's on Oct. 16 last, when the Rector of the City Church denounced Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham,



before his sermon, for his modernist teachings and withdrew from the service followed by some four hundred of the congregation, throws a flood of light on the inherent weakness of Christianity, its inertness and fear of truth. Dr. Barnes appears to us to be a sincere lover of truth; he feels that the crude Biblical theories about the origin and nature of man must be given up and proved scientific theories adopted in stead. He preached a striking sermon in the Westminster Abbey and concluded by saying that "pseudo-religious propaganda is now more shameless and superstition is more prevalent," and that science has preserved standards which organised religion has frequently failed to safeguard. He also addressed an open letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury after his denunciation by the City Rector, in which he attributes one cause of the weakness of the Church to the apparent determination of religious teachers to ignore scientific discovery. The reply that the Archbishop of Canterbury has given to it is extremely disappointing. He evades the main issue which is whether the Church is ready to accept truth whatever it be. He says that the Bishop's position is not novel to him. But he does not say whether he accepts it. The greatest weakness of Christianity, in our opinion, is its hesitation to accept truth. There must be a readiness to accept truth, even though it clashes with existing dogmas. Only thus can religion survive the growth of human knowledge and minister to the spiritual needs of mankind. We do not say that Christianity must accept the theory of evolution. But if evolution is true, and so far as it is true, Christianity *must* accept it. Similarly also of other truths. Of course there is a fear, a real fear, that if it incorporated all such truths into it, it will undergo a change beyond recognition. We do not see, however, how that eventuality can be averted.

The attitude of the Roman Catholic Church is still more narrow and dogmatic. Naturally, no Roman Catholic Bishop stood up for scientific creation theories. On the other hand, the attacks of several Roman Catholic priests on Sir Arthur Keith's address have been very virulent indeed. A "Catholic Scientist," writing in the *Universe*, a London Catholic weekly, takes an ambiguous attitude towards the Biblical theory of creation. He says: "Among the decrees of the Biblical Commission, June 30, 1909, is one which says that the book of Genesis must be taken in the "literal historical sense." From the time of St. Thomas Aquinas the literal sense has been understood to be of two kinds: (1) The "proper," or primary, kind, which is equivalent to literal in the English meaning of the word; (2) the "improper," or secondary, kind, which is what we call, in English, metaphorical. Hence another decree declares that Catholics are not bound to take "every word and phrase" in the primary literal sense, especially when it is



obvious that they are used "improperly," or metaphorically, or when reason suggests as much. This last little clause is instructive. It practically invites us to form hypothesis. We should remember that, although the substance of Scripture is inspired, the sentences were not dictated. The writers wrote in their natural style." We do not know how far helpful Catholics find these decrees. We, however, do not see how the permission to interpret Scripture even metaphorically improves matters. By no stretch of imagination can we deduce the scientific theory of evolution from the story of the book of Genesis. It is irrelevant to say that all scientists do not agree on evolution. The point is, whether Catholics are ready to discard Biblical myths in favour of theories which are scientifically proved. The above-mentioned decrees do not say so. The attitude of the Church is extremely dogmatic. The attitude of Hinduism will serve as a good example to Christianity in this matter. We also have crude creation myths which were certainly the product of the popular mind. But there are other philosophical theories of creation. Hinduism does not insist that all its votaries must believe in one particular theory. The fundamentals of Hindu religion, unlike those of Christianity, have been derived from other sources than the story of creation. Hinduism is ready to accept any theory of creation, provided it is rational, without requiring to deduce it literally or metaphorically from its scriptures.

A peculiar feature of this attack on the British Association address has been the reiteration of the special position of man in God's creation. Attacking Sir Arthur Keith's statement that the human brain "reveals no formation of any sort that is not in the brain of the gorilla or chimpanzee," a Dominican father, preaching at Leeds Cathedral, said that the statement was "unscientific, mischievous, misleading and untrue." Another father inferred that "here there was a plain denial of the existence of any spiritual soul in man." "The soul of man," he said, "is wholly different from the "souls" of the lower animals—a conclusion at which Aristotle arrived by pure reason without the aid of revelation. Those who accepted revelation must believe that the soul is the direct creation of God, that it is an immortal spirit, and confers upon man powers and responsibilities utterly different in their nature from anything possessed by lower animals." We confess, we are unable to understand how the denial or affirmation of soul follows from Sir Arthur's statement. We think this question of soul was far from his thought and he simply spoke of the biological and physiological aspects of man. He was, in our opinion, perfectly justified in looking upon man as belonging to the same process of evolution as other animals. It is really astonishing to know that there are people—educated people—in the twentieth century Europe, who



believe that animals have no soul and that man's soul is a special creation. The "Catholic Scientist" whom we have quoted before, says: "There are many forms of "Modified Transformation" which profess to account for the gradual development of organic beings from primitive beginnings even up to the point where a certain creature was like man in all save those higher faculties which distinguish us from the beasts ; at which point God, by a special act, endowed him with a rational and spiritual soul. "And the Lord God formed man from the slime of the earth" (material evolution of the body) "and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul." "

We may well guess the psychology behind this eagerness to allocate a special position to man in creation : man is extremely reluctant to find himself classified with animals,—his inner spiritual dignity revolts against this idea. But it is not by denying scientific truths and merely harping on man's dignity that Christianity can escape from the impasse that its conflict with science has created. Lesser truths are conquered only by higher truths. Christianity, if it would maintain the dignity of man, must discover higher scientific truths about him, and not seek the support of so-called scriptural revelations. The Hindu view is that if we know *all* realities scientifically, not merely sensible realities, we shall come to truths which will support man's spiritual dignity and at the same time harmonise it with science. Modern science has not yet penetrated beyond the sensible world ; that is why its conclusions seem repugnant to our spiritual sense. Hinduism has fully investigated and systematised the supersensible facts ; that is how it finds in modern science corroborative evidences to its own conclusions. Thus after long investigation, Hinduism has come to know the true nature of the soul, which is quite distinct from the Christian idea of it. The Christian idea of the soul is obviously arbitrary. Reason cannot make a distinction between the souls of animals and that of man in the way Christianity does. Is the so-called rational and spiritual soul a separate principle from that of consciousness in man, through which he knows, feels and wills? If they are one, do we not find the same principle of consciousness in animals also? Sir J. C. Bose's researches clearly indicate that that principle exists also in plants and even in metals. One ultimate life-principle runs like a thread through all things. To the Hindu mind such distinctions between animal souls and human souls, and the special creation of the latter seems extremely crude thinking. Christianity must learn to become more philosophical and more real in its views.

What is the Hindu view? It is true we find in man faculties which are not generally discernible in animals, e.g., reason, thoughts of God and of immortality, etc. This is not, however, a difference in kind, but in degree only. The Hindu



conceives the soul, spirit, Self or Atman as separate from the body and mind, and as attributeless. Nothing can be predicated of it except perhaps that it is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss absolute. This effulgent Atman manifesting in and through mind and body constitutes what is called consciousness or soul-life. The more highly developed an organism, the greater is the manifestation and therefore the higher the soul-life. The difference between animals and man is not a difference of souls, but of the development of body and mind. From the ape to the ape-like man is a natural progression, and it did not require a special intervention of God. The mind developed, the body developed, and naturally the inner Self found a greater manifestation. Reason or spiritual consciousness were not extraneous additions to the animal 'soul' to make up man. These are the light of the indwelling spirit itself ; only being enveloped in the undeveloped body and mind of animals, it could not shine out.

Along with this view of the existence of soul in all beings equally, there is the other idea of *karma* and reincarnation. The soul embodies and disembodies itself. According to the development of the mind which accompanies the soul even after the death of the body, as long as the soul does not know its true transcendental nature, the soul assumes a body at rebirth, either animal or human, works out its previously acquired tendencies and acquires fresh tendencies. Thus go the rounds of births and deaths, till through the gradual perfection of the mind its glory shines out fully and it knows itself ; and then it has not to be born any more. This view does not any way conflict with the scientific theory of evolution. Individuals die and are born ; but the species continues and develops according to its laws and environment. Science does not pretend to say that there is no post-mortem existence, nor can it explain why individuals are born with different innate tendencies. The Hindu doctrine of karma and reincarnation really supplements and perfects the scientific view. The species develops according to its environmental changes ; and individuals are born into it as the most suitable field for the working out of their karma, takes advantage of the collective life of the species, and dies in due time to be born again in other species according to the tendencies of their accumulated karmas. This view is slowly gaining ground in the West and very soon Christianity will have to recognise its truth.

We must mention here, however, that the above is but one aspect of the Hindu attitude ; the other, the truer, aspect we shall deal with later on.

The conflict between Christianity and science cannot be resolved, in our opinion, without thorough changes in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. It must change its idea of



creation and outlook on the world, its ideas of soul and soul-life, its ideas of salvation and the value of a Saviour in the scheme of spiritual life. The progress of science is slowly pushing Christianity towards these changes. It is afraid that the changes, if accepted, will mean the downfall of religion in the West. It is an idle fear. We are confident they will mean its salvation. The West needs a scientific religion.

But dogmatism dies hard. In order to reconcile science and religion the device has been suggested that the sensible and the supersensible facts should be allocated to science and religion respectively, the one guided by proof and reason, the other by faith. Thus Mr. Hilaire Belloc in the *Sunday Herald*, London : "If you mean by religion any system to which some proposition is vital, which proposition has been disproved and rendered in the highest degree improbable by scientific (that is, by organised, exact and repeated) measurement and observation, then there is conflict between your religion and science ; and your religion must give way, unless you can produce some basis of certitude stronger than the accumulated evidence and co-ordination of evidence against it." That there are such religions, he admits, though he thinks that they are mostly of recent origin. But he says, suppose a man's religion is not of this kind ; suppose its vital conceptions are such as Immortality, the Creative Personal Godhead, the Incarnation, Redemption, Resurrection ; where then is there any conflict between it and any body of ascertained facts ? "So far we have no example of such conflict. Obviously there is no conflict between any one of these ideas and science on the ground of experiment." "If we are told that the universe was not created, but existed from all eternity and is sufficient to itself.....this is not an affirmation based on *science*. It may be argued in the abstract, but physical proof there can be none. There has not been advanced, and there could not be, a set of proved physical facts leading necessarily to such a conclusion. If we are told that the sequence of natural events can never be interrupted, and that this is scientific—that is, proved—fact, we ask : 'How proved ? ' "

This is no doubt an ingenious argument of Mr. Belloc's. But it fails to convince. He forgets that the question 'How proved ? ' can be asked also in reference to the accepted beliefs in immortality, etc. Even supposing that certain things are incapable of *scientific* demonstration, it does not follow that any kinds of beliefs will do. And he overlooks the fundamental tendency of the human mind to refuse to bifurcate itself in its attitude to the sensible and the supersensible realities. We are impelled by our constitution to form a synthesis of both. If certain facts are proved true, the unproved things are bound to be conceived on the basis of the proved facts. It may be



an abstraction. That does not matter. Human nature must have its way. The mind wants to conceive the entire universe of its experience and imagination as a unitary whole, governed by interrelated laws and grounded on a unity. Naturally this conception must be based on the actually experienced facts. All religions therefore have this universal outlook. All of them view man and his life in relation to the entire existence and therefrom deduce his duty and destiny. Religion cannot leave off half the world to science and remain content with peopling the other half with beliefs and dogmas. We do not mean that Christian beliefs in immortality, etc. are wrong. What we want to emphasise is that these must not be mere *beliefs*; either they must be as incontestably proved as scientific facts or they must give way to theories which follow, may be, as mere abstractions, from proved sensible facts. That is why science is proving such a lion in the path of religions of mere *beliefs*. We must get hold of supersensible facts; and when all facts, sensible and supersensible, have been known, we shall find that the scientific theories deal with only a fraction of reality and are therefore imperfect and require to be supplanted by higher conceptions. But till this has been done, it is non-sensical for Christianity or any other religion to deny science.

It may be said, "What are we to do with the supersensible? We do not experience it. We must therefore depend on revelation." The answer is that revelation is not a unique event occurring only once in history, to a few selected individuals. It is accessible to all. We deny that certain things must always remain incapable of demonstration and will have to be taken on trust. How did these first come to the knowledge of man? The same method of knowledge is ever open to mankind. Every man is capable of experiencing the supersensible like the original prophets and test the truth of the scriptural assertions. We need not take them on trust. There is a way by which all things sensible and supersensible can be directly experienced by every man. It is called Yoga. When the mind is purified and concentrated, then the truths of all things flash in the mind. The Western mind, we know, will look askance at what we call Yoga. That is because it does not know. It is through Yoga that the Biblical prophets came to experience the supersensible when they really did so,—for there are also many myths in the Bible. The only scientific way is to test the revelations through Yoga and see, for example if the world is really created in the Biblical fashion.

How can we experience the fact of creation *now*, which was done an immemorial time ago? The question arises out of a wrong notion of creation. We assume that creation took place at a particular point of time, whereas the fact is that time itself is a part of created things. Creation really is timeless. It



is not a *past* event. We dare not call it *present* either, for that also will be referring to time. Our present state of consciousness, that is, the so-called normal consciousness, is incapable of conceiving and describing it. We can only negatively state it to be timeless. That state of timelessness we reach by going beyond the present state of consciousness into superconsciousness, and then the truth flashes.

If the Christians are to come to a clear and true idea of what they call revelations, the only method is to attain to the superconscious state and know the truth face to face. Not one individual, but many, will have to be superconscious. They will then have to compare notes and systematise their experience into philosophy. This is the true scientific method. We require a certain preliminary training before we can understand scientific demonstration or ourselves observe and experiment scientifically. We require instruments also. In this supersensible demonstration also, we require a preliminary preparation which is the purification of mind, and an instrument, the concentrated mind. Hindu philosophy and theology was thus obtained. With us, revelation is not a unique thing to be merely *believed*. These revelations have been tested and experienced time and again by legions of saints and seers, and on their combined evidence, the Hindu views of soul, God and the world have been based. And every one is free to test them himself. In fact, the idea of taking things on trust is not considered religious at all. There is no religion in merely believing in scriptural revelations; until and unless we experience them ourselves, we are mere talkers.

A correct idea of the universe and of the inter-relations of things, of whether evolution or any other theory is true or not, can be had only by knowing all, the sensible and supersensible. Hinduism has done so. What is the attitude of Hinduism towards the theory of evolution? Does Hinduism uphold evolution? Yes and No,—is the answer. From one standpoint, evolution is true. But from another, the higher, standpoint, taking the entire universe into view, there is no evolution: the whole 'creation' is timeless. Man is endowed with two kinds of visions, subjective and objective. In the normal state, man conceives himself objectively, as existing in time and space, floating on the stream of world-events. He thinks he is born and dies at certain moments. He finds the world about him changing and growing. He believes in *history*. He finds that the world has age and conceives the idea of evolution; and scientists point out how from a nebula the earth has come to reach its present condition, variegated with multifarious species of plants and animals. From this, the objective, point of view, evolution seems the most cogent version of the becoming of the sensible universe. Even apart from scientific proof, the



concept of evolution furnishes the most convenient form of systematising the history of the world.

But this convenience is only apparent. For the visible is not the only world existing and there is another stand-point, the higher, subjective, vision which is more essential to man than the objective. Objectively, we are creatures of time; subjectively, time itself is our creature. All things derive their reality from our cognition of them. Little effort is needed to demonstrate it. The universe with its variegated forms and sensible properties become non-existent to us as soon as we dissociate our senses from it. Of course the roots of phenomena go much deeper than sense-perception, they reach the deep strata of the mind. But it is possible by the destruction of desires to draw them out of the mind, and then phenomena become nothing. Therefore the more I purify and concentrate my mind, the more do I come to feel that the entire phenomenal world has its centre of existence in me. It is not independent of me, as I find from the objective view-point. I am the axis of the universe. The universe rises and falls with my cognition and non-cognition of it. We may recount an experience of a friend in this connection. He was at that period of life assiduously engaged in reasoning about the true nature of the world; that is to say, he was practising what is known as *Vichāra*. *Vichāra* consists not only in intellectually determining the nature of the world and the Self, but also in correctly feeling and perceiving them as they really are. Our friend was one day deeply immersed in this practice, when he suddenly felt the world shaking and about to fall into crumbles like a burnt leaf. He assured us that the experience was overwhelming. His mind was in a very elevated and concentrated mood at the time of the incident; but before he could realise the shattering of the world into annihilation, his mind slid down and the intensity of concentration was lost. This experience deeply impressed him with the illusory nature of the universe. We believe that he was on the threshold of a supreme experience and that it was no hallucination. It was broad day-light; he was looking on; he was then in the best of his health and was well-known for his keen intellect.

This experience does not seem strange or irrational to us. Whoever practises concentration of mind, will reach this conclusion at one time or another. As we remarked before, the universe does not consist of this sensible world only, of the earth and the stars. There are many more finer worlds inhabited by celestial beings. It is said that there are five such worlds between our earth and the Absolute. As the Yogi rises up in meditation and attains superconsciousness, he finds all these worlds gradually merge into his consciousness till he becomes one with the Absolute. He finds that he is not only the axis



of the sensible world, but also of those finer worlds. This is the subjective vision. When the Yogi descends from the realisation of the Absolute, he finds the same process repeated inversely: he finds finer and grosser worlds emanate from him. This dual experience has been very finely described by Swami Vivekananda in two Bengali songs. The first describes the emergence of the phenomenal universe in him. Here is the translation:

Lo! The sun is not, nor the comely moon,  
 All light extinct; in the great void of space  
 Floats shadow-like the image-universe.  
 In the void of mind involute, there floats  
 The fleeting universe, rises and floats,  
 Sinks again, ceaseless, in the current "I."  
 Slowly, slowly, the shadow-multitude  
 Entered the primal womb, and flowed ceaseless  
 The only current, the "I am," "I am."  
 Lo! 'Tis stopped, ev'n that current flows no more,  
 Void merged into void,—beyond speech and mind!  
 Whose heart understands, he verily does.

It is to be noted how the Swami at first felt the entire universe float picture-like in his mind, till at last it entered the primal womb, the "I"-consciousness. This "I" also was subsequently annihilated and the Absolute alone shone in its pristine effulgence. This is the subjective vision in its fulness.

The reverse process, the descent from the Absolute, has been described in the other song. Here also the "I" rises first. From the Absolute, "down floweth the river causal, wearing the form of desire radiant, . . . roaring the constant roar, 'I am,' 'I am,' 'I am.'" Out of it take birth "millions of moons, millions of suns"—the "fourteen worlds" of the Puranas, inhabited by innumerable beings and "pleasure, and pain, disease, birth and death."

It is from such experiences that the Hindu cosmological theories have been derived. The Rig Veda (10, 129) in describing the creation of the universe rightly observes that "sages have seen all this in their hearts, sifting existence from non-existence." This, Yoga, is the only method of knowing the secrets of existence, and this is the only true theory of "creation" possible,—for it is no mere theory, but actual experience.

Where, then, is the place of evolution in this cosmic experience? The entire universe consisting of finer and grosser worlds are existent and yet non-existent: they exist when our mind with its out-going tendencies exists; they become non-existent when that mind dies. The very fact that the worlds exist in the subjective cognition, proves that time, and therefore evolution, has no meaning in relation to the whole. Time



is true only of the parts, of limited, objective vision. The universe is the *form* taken by Ignorance. So long as we are bound by Ignorance, we think ourselves as inhabiting certain worlds, as points of time and space. We find the world stretching around us with its seeming independence and infinitude; it is only then that the question of how and wherefrom we come arises. But when we dissociate ourselves from Ignorance, the worlds appear as categories of Ignorance, existing on our sufferance. There is no question then of creation or evolution. The same Rig Vedic hymn very significantly concludes: "Whence this projection arose, whether held or not,—of this, He, the Ruler in the supreme sky, knows, or *per chance even He does not know.*"

Taken as a whole, therefore, evolution cannot be true of the universe: the entire universe with its different planes rises in a timeless, mysterious way which the normal mind cannot conceive. Only to a 'normal' human being, shut up within the earthly existence and isolated from the existence of the remaining universe, does the world seem as existing and growing in time, and to him, then, the idea of evolution appears most cogent. But since the higher knowledge has been made known to men, can this partial view satisfy them?

This Hindu view confers a supreme dignity on the individual,—the highest is always within his reach. Hinduism urges the development of the subjective vision, which is the key to man's true freedom and the charter of his Divinity. The antagonism to the theory of evolution is justified to the extent that it is a conscious or subconscious revolt against the perpetual bondage of Nature, to which the theory of evolution indirectly and practically condemns man. If the whole universe is one evolving whole, individuals are but straws on the current of that evolution and have their fate entirely in the grip of evolutionary forces. This absurd view is sometimes found to have been fashioned into a creed. Nothing can be more erroneous, enervating and demoralising. No, there is no such cosmic law. The only law that subsumes the visible and invisible universe is your own Ignorance, O man, and you *can* break it *any* moment and realise freedom. This is the supreme message of Vedanta.

## IDEALS OF INDIAN WOMEN

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

As the light of dawn breaks on the long curving street of the Indian village, the chance passer-by may see at every door some kneeling woman busied with the ceremony of the Salutation of the Threshold. A pattern drawn on the ground in lines of



white rice-flour with blossoms placed within it at central points remains for a few hours to mark the fact that cleansing and worship have been performed. The joy of home finds silent speech in the artistic zest of the design. Wealth or poverty is betrayed according as the flowers are a bright net-work of winter gourd blossoms, a stiff little row of two or three white daisies or some other offering, more or less humble as the case may be. But everywhere we read a habit of thought to which all things are symbolistic ; the air upon the doorsill full of dim boding and suggestiveness as to the incomings and the outgoings which the day shall witness ; and the morning opening and setting-wide the door, an act held to be no way safe unless done by one who will brood in doing it upon the divine security and benediction of her beloved.

Such thought was the fashion of a very ancient world—the world in which myths were born, out of which religions issued and wherein vague and mysterious ideas of “luck” originated. The custom bears its age upon its brow. For thousands of years must Indian women have risen at dawn to perform the Salutation of the Threshold. Thousands of years of simplicity and patience like the patience of the peasant, like that of the grass, speak in the beautiful rite. It is this patience of woman that makes civilizations. It is this patience of the Indian woman mingled with this large power of reverie, that has made and makes the Indian nationality.

For the habit of the country, in and by itself, is complete and organic. The steps by which it manifests its orderly unfolding are sequent and harmonious, and imply none of those violent digressions known as progress and reform. The women of Bengal worship their husbands and serve their children and their households, with the rapt idealism of the saints. The women of Maharashtra are as strong and determined as any in the West. The Rajputana queen prides herself on the unflinching courage of her race that would follow the husband even into the funeral fire, yet will not allow a king to include his wife amongst his subjects. The woman of Madras struggles even with agony to reach the spiritual pole-star, and builds up, again and again like some careful beaver, any fragment of her wall of custom that the resistless tides of the modern world may attempt to break away. And the daughters of Guzerat are, like the women of merchant-peoples everywhere, soft and silken and flower-like, dainty and clinging as a dream. Or we may penetrate into the Moslem zenana, to find the same graceful Indian womanhood, sometimes clad in the *Sari*, sometimes in the short Turkish jacket, but ever the self-same gentle and beautiful wifehood and motherhood, though here it beats its breast and cries upon Ali and Hussain instead of prostrating itself before some image.



Nor is there any real monotony of type. Every order of woman finds its strong individual representation. Bruneild herself was not more heroic than thousands of whom the Rajput chronicles tell. Nay, in the supreme act of her life, the mystic death on the throne of flame beside the dead Siegfried, many a quiet little Bengalee woman has been her peer. Joan of Arc was not more a patriot than the wonderful queen of Jhansi, who in the year 1857 fought in person with the British troops. The children of men who saw it talk to this day of the form of this woman's father swinging on the gibbet high above the city walls, hanged there by his daughter's orders after she had killed him with her sword, for the crime of making a treaty with the English to deliver the keys into their hands. They talk, too, of her swift rush across the drowsy midday camp at the head of her troops, her lance poised to pierce, her bay mare Lakshmi straining every muscle, the whizz of the charge so unexpected that only here and there a dazed white soldier could gather presence of mind to fire a shot at the cavalcade already passed. And old men still sing her glory with tears choking their voice.

The Rani of Jhansi was no purdah woman. She was a Mahratta with a passion for her country, and practised since girlhood in the chase. She had been the real head of the kingdom ever since her marriage, for her husband was only a handsome figure-head, who spent in making feeble poetry the time he might have given to rule or to his wife. Her life had been in fact as solitary as that of a mediæval saint. And her ostensible reason for fighting was the right to adopt an heir. There has always indeed been a great development of the political faculty amongst Mahratta women. It is well known that long before the time of Jhansi, the great Sivaji owed the inspiration that led to the national re-awakening to his mother, rather than his father.

The custom of secluding women is thus not nearly so universal in India as is imagined by people who gather their ideas from unreliable accounts of the woes of high-caste women in Bengal. The lower classes move freely in all countries, for household work and the earning of their livelihood compel; and in the aristocratic closeness of her retreat, the Mahomedan woman ranks first, the Rajput second and only thirdly the Bengali, the screen is always more easily lifted for the Hindu than for the Moslem. A thousand considerations intervene to mitigate its severity in the case of the former. And in the South and West it is actually non-existent. By this it is not to be understood that any Hindu women meet men outside their kindred with the same freedom and frankness as their Western sisters. Very old adaptations of the Ramayana shew us the brother-in-law who has never looked higher than the heroine's feet, and the wife who blushes rather than mention her



husband's name. But this power of the individual to isolate himself in the midst of apparently unrestrained social intercourse is necessary in all communities, and has its correspondences in Western society itself. Freedom is granted only to those who are self-disciplined. It might be added too that a true wife has as little occasion to realize the possible jealousy of her husband in the East as in the West and that an unreasonable fit of suspicion would be considered the same weakness and insult by the one society as by the other. Yet the liberty of Madras and Bombay for all its limitations is a reality and in the province of Malabar woman is actually in the ascendancy. The curious country of learned matriarchs and kings who rule as the regents of their sisters will have many disclosures to make to the world, when India shall have produced a sufficient number of competent sociologists of her own blood. It is commonly said to be characteristically polyandrous, but it is not so in the same sense as Thibet. For no woman regards herself as the wife of two men at once. The term matriarchal is more accurate inasmuch as the husband visits his wife in her own home and the right of inheritance is through the mother.

Thus, far from India's being the land of the uniform oppression of woman by uniform method, it represents the whole cycle of feminist institutions. There is literally no theory of feminine rights and position, that does not find illustration somewhere within its limits. If we ask for the dominion of individual beauty and charm, there is the queen to whom the Taj was built. Or the "four perfect women" of Islam—the foster-mother of Moses, Mary the Madonna, Khadiza and Fatima—offer a world in themselves including each of the main types of grave, sweet womanhood, according as her power is temporal or spiritual, individualistic or communal in its display.

But if we look for the unique dignity of ethical achievement for the translation of wifehood not into a novel, but into a religion, we must turn to the Hindu life, suffused as that is with the pursuit of the ideals of the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Puranas. Savitri, the Indian Alcestis; Sati, who gave up the body as one carelessly throws aside a mantle, because it had been guilty of hearing her father abuse her husband; Uma, who wooed the great God with penances; and Sita, divine embodiment of steadfastness and strength; all these are held as the great Hindu exemplars from Malabar to Nepal.

Throughout Asia where social theory has never been confused by the existence of a privileged class regarded as the type, labour, rising into Government, stands side by side with prayer and motherhood as the main opportunities of woman. The cow-house, the dairy, the kitchen, the granary, the chapel, with a hundred other offices, divide the attention of the ladies of the household. A rich family will have its large cooking room for



the cooks, and in addition, not one, but a series of kitchens, for the use of wife and daughters. Old houses are built with their finest gardens and orchards accessible only from the zenana. Nothing is more noticeable in the lives of Indian women than the readiness and spontaneity with which work is sub-divided and the peaceable way in which it is carried out. This is most striking in regard to the preparation of food. Every Indian woman is a cook, often highly skilled, and some years ago there was no compliment so great as an invitation from a neighbouring family, on the occasion of some important festivity, to come and help with the *cuisine*. Even Hindu society, however, is affected by the ideals of Western organization and emergency. Work nowadays tends more and more to be laid on the shoulders of Brahman servants, imported for the occasion.

Modern sociologists say that the theory of the equality of man and woman is essentially a phenomenon of coast life and fisher communities. It is interesting to note in this regard that in the fishing villages outside Calcutta, the wife buys his take from the husband and sells it in the market at her own risk. If on his way home her man has disposed of his load to some merchant, she will follow the matter up and buy it back for her own trade. Possibly the same process of keeping an account against the husband is gone through in Madras and Bombay also, for in all parts of India, it is the woman who brings the fish to the bazar. In this class, there is no question of seclusion, and the fisher-wife in the matter of her freedom and responsibilities is a European woman.

A like liberty obtained, however, amongst the women of the Sanskrit drama. Whatever be the date of the play of Kalidasa, it is evident that that traditional story of Shakuntala round which it is constructed, must have pictured her as studying with the boy disciples of her father and receiving his guests during his absence in unquestioned propriety. It is to be inferred then that such a code of manners was not inconsonant with the memories and the general ideas of the race who transmitted the tale, and if this be so, it cannot be natural to Hindus to cloister and veil their womankind.

But we cannot on the other hand admit that the seclusion of woman is a custom introduced into India by a kind of Mahomedan contamination. This thoughtless explanation, even if historical, would only drive the question a point further,—what induced the Mulsiman to screen his women? It is unfortunate, for those who hold the theory, that Islam derives the religious sanction of its social institutions from Arabia and that the Arab woman is said to enjoy considerable freedom and power. Hence it would seem that even the Mahomedan adopted the practice from Persia, from China or from Greece. If he, again, had been responsible for the custom in India, we might have expected that



in the neighbourhood of Delhi and Agra, the capitals of the Mogul empire, Hindu *pardah* would have been the strictest. This, however, is not the case, Rajputana and Bengal being far more deeply permeated by the habit. The degradation of attempting to explain away a reproach by fastening it on some one else is surely obvious. We must seek elsewhere for the reason of a convention that seems almost instinctive in certain parts of the Orient.

There is some degree of truth in the supposition that society in a military state tends to seclude its women. The mistake probably lies in thinking that this is the only factor in moral evolution that affects their position in this way. Rather it would appear that amongst the primary occupations of mankind,—hunting, fishing, tillage and what not,—there is a distinct tendency to promote different types of institutions. Other things being equal, those occupations that imply a sustained and arduous conquest of Nature tend to equality of rights and similarity of manners for men and women, whereas, under long-settled conditions from which anxiety is somewhat eliminated, there is a progressive inclination towards divergence of their lines of activity, accompanied by the more complete surrender of woman to the protection of man. Thus an important feature of the Hindu as of the Anglican wedding ceremony is the fact that her father “gives away” the bride into the keeping of her husband.

The tendency to divergence of function would be accelerated in Asia by the nature of the climate which makes stillness and passivity the highest luxury. This fact again combines with military prepossessions to make the custom of seclusion especially characteristic of royal households and having once achieved such social prestige, it speedily extends over wide areas. It may be pointed out that even in Europe, the freedom of woman differs widely with her nationality, and that in England and America the accumulation of fortune is often an influence towards restricting the social intercourse of the women of the wealthy family.

If this theory be correct, it would explain the freedom of woman in India during the first Aryan period as an outcome of the struggle with earth and forest. The early immigration of agricultural races across the Himalayas from Central Asia must have meant a combat with Nature of the severest kind. It was a combat in which the wife was the helpmeet of the husband. If he cleared the jungle and hunted the game, she had to help in field and garden. The Aryan population was scanty and she must be ready to take his place. Vicissitudes were many. At a moment's notice, she must be prepared to meet an emergency, brave, cheerful and self-helpful. In such a life, woman must move as easily as man.

It was far otherwise however when the country was cleared, agriculture established on the Aryan scale and when the energy



of the race was concentrated on the higher problem of conserving and extending its culture of the mind and spirit. It is doubtful whether Indian philosophy could ever have been completed on any other terms than those of the seclusion of woman. "This world is all a dream: God alone is real,"—such an ultimatum could hardly have been reached in a society like that of Judaism where love and beauty were avowed before all as the seal of divine approval on a successful life. Not that India despises these happy gifts. But they are the joys of the householder in her eyes, not of the spiritual seer. "The religion of the wife lies in serving her husband: the religion of the widow lies in serving God," say the women, and there is no doubt in their minds that the widow's call is higher.

But while we talk of the seclusion of woman as if it were a fact, we must be careful to guard against misconception. In society and in the streets of Indian cities, it is practically true that we see men alone. This fact makes it a possibility for the religious to pass his life without looking on the face of any woman save such as he may call "mother." Inside the home, if we penetrate so far, we shall probably meet with none but women. But if we live there, day after day, we shall find that every woman has familiar intercourse with some man or men in the family. The relation between brothers and sisters-in-law is all gaiety and sweetness. Scarcely any children are so near to a woman as the sons of her husband's sisters. It is the proud prerogative of these, whatever be their age, to regard her as their absolute slave. There is a special delicacy of affection between the husband's father and the daughter-in-law. Cousins count as brothers and sisters. And from the fact that every woman has her rightful place in some family, it follows that there is more healthy human intercourse with men in almost every Hindu woman's life than in those of thousands of single women living alone or following professional career in the suburbs of London and other Western cities. It is a social intercourse, too, that is full of a refined and delicate sense of humour. Men who have been to Europe always declare that the zenana woman stands unrivalled in her power of repartee. English fun is apt to strike the Indian as little loud. How charming is the Bengali version of the "bad penny that always turns up" in "I am the broken cowrie that has been to seven markets," that is, "I may be worthless, but I am knowing."

We are apt to think only of that towards which we aspire, as an ideal. We rarely think of those assimilated ideals that reveal themselves as custom. Yet if we analyse the conventions that dominate an Indian woman's life, we cannot fail to come upon a great ideal of self-control. The closeness and intimacy of the family life, and the number of the interests that have to be considered, have no doubt made strict discipline necessary



for the sake of peace. Hence a husband and wife may not address each other in the presence of others. A wife may not name her husband, much less praise him, and so on. Only little children are perfectly untrammelled and may bestow their affection when and where they will. All these things are for the protection of the community, lest it be outraged by the parading of a relationship of intimacy, or victimised by an enthusiasm which it could not be expected to share.

This constant and happy subordination of oneself to others does not strike the observer, only because it is complete. It is not the characteristic of the specially developed individual alone, for it is recognised and required, in all degrees of delicacy, by society at large. Unselfishness and the desire to serve stand out in the Western personality against a background of individualistic institutions, and convey an impression of the eagerness and struggle of pity, without which the world would certainly be the poorer. But the Eastern woman is unaware of any defiance of institutions. Her charities are required of her. Her vows and penances are unknown, even to her husband, but were they told, they would excite no remark in a community where all make similar sacrifices. This is only to say that she is more deeply self-effacing and more effectively altruistic than any Western. The duty of tending the sick is so much a matter of course that it would not occur to her to erect a hospital or to attempt to learn nursing. Here she misses something doubtless, for the modern organisation of skill has produced a concentration of attention on method that avails to save much suffering. Still, we must not too readily assume that our own habit of massing together all the sick and hungry and insane and isolating them in worlds visited throughout with like afflictions to their own proceeds entirely from a sense of humanity on our part, though it has not failed to secure some excellent results.

Much is sometimes made of the fact that Gautama Buddha, brought face to face with weariness, disease and death, went forth to find for man a new religion, whereas the Christ put out His hand to heal the leper and raise the dead. It would be cruel at such a juncture to point out that both these great personages were Orientals, manifesting different phases of the Asiatic attitude towards pain. It is better, leaving to Europe her unaccountable assumption that she has some exclusive right in the Teacher of Galilee, to enter into the question as it appears to the Eastern mind, on its own merits. So viewed, it would be pointed out that the dead raised must still die again, that the leper healed was still in danger of disease, whereas Nirvana means release as it were into a new dimension, whereupon no consciousness of either health or sickness can ever intrude. Again taking the story of Buddha as it stands, we must remember its background of the *Jataka* Birth stories. And here we see that the Great



Renunciation is only accounted for in the eyes of the Indian people by the inwrought power of the sacrifice of his own life repeated five hundred times for the immediate good of others. The establishment of hundreds of hospitals for men and beasts, nay, the filling of countless hearts with pity and with peace, are only some of the results of Prince Siddhartha's choice.

Women are the guardians of humanity's ethical ideals. The boy would not volunteer to carry the dead to the burning-ghat, if his mother had not brought him up from babyhood to admire the deed. The husband would not be so strenuous to return home at his best, if his wife did not understand and appreciate his noblest side. But more than this, they are themselves the perpetual illustrations of those ideals. The words, "He that will be chief among you, let him be your servant," fall on Western ears with a certain sense of sublime paradox. But the august speaker uttered the merest truism of that simple Eastern world in which He moved. He roused no thrill of surprise in the minds of His hearers. For to each, his own mother was chief and yet servant of all.

Those who, knowing the East, read the list of the seven corporal works of mercy, may well start to imagine themselves back in the Hindu home, watching its laborious, pious women as they move about their daily tasks, never forgetting that the first necessity is to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to harbour the harbourless, and the like, and that till these things are done, their own wants must not be met. Truly the East is eternally the mother of religions, simply solely because she has assimilated as ordinary social functions what the West holds to be only the duty of officialism, or the message of the church. To those who deeply understand, it may well seem that Christianity in Europe is neither more nor less than a vast mission of the Asiatic Life.

## ANTHROPOSOPHY \*

(ITS VIEW OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL AND ITS DESTINY)

BY DR. HANS KORSTER

*Vice-Consul for Germany, Calcutta*

In order to explain the view of Anthroposophy with regard to the individual soul of man, it is necessary to consider first the common conception of it that now prevails in Europe. *Individualism* is the dominant note in the West of to-day. Christianity has given to it the principal impetus. By the

\* \* See review of the writer's book, *Anthroposophy in India*, towards the end of this issue.—Ed.



circles which take the Christian view seriously, the individual human soul is regarded as immortal, but not pre-existing. It is in each case a new gift of God, going to him after death. The materialism, however, that has swept over most of the people, has not left much of this idea, and has caused individualism to lose its religious justification. Now-a-days, as a matter of fact, individuality is realised only in the struggle of life in the material world. Nevertheless it would be taking a one-sided view to ignore what may be achieved even by such realisation. The endurance, the up-standing character, the not giving up in face of the greatest odds, are characteristics worth the attainment. Moreover, there is always the deeper reality behind, of which this is only the perversion. So Anthroposophy does not look down upon it, or advise it to be rooted out.

On the contrary, a strong Ego developed by *dharma-karma* is a quality of character essential in the pursuit of the spiritual path. What is necessary, therefore, is not to destroy this basic force, but to purify it from its selfish and materialistic attributes. Man has already been too much spoilt by his surrender to materialism.

The personality of man needs to be built up anew, in order to loose his egoistic bandages. Here Anthroposophy steps in by showing the way,—the path of knowledge (*Jñāna*) and realisation (*Yoga*).

Man has to proceed along the path that leads from his own limited person to the great Nature that surrounds him and in which he must see and recognise his true and higher body. What continually happens around him,—the day, the night, the air, the rain,—these realities he must approach in a new connection. They are not merely outer facts to be dealt with in a utilitarian manner, but each of them is a world of its own. By widening his mind one becomes aware of their inner life. In India this is well-known since the oldest time, and especially the coming in contact with the air-*tattwa* by proper and disciplined breathing has been practised. In the same way contact may be established with the other elements or *tattwas*. The resulting experiences make for the embracing of the great units as they exist in Nature by means of the corresponding senses slumbering within ourselves, the awakening within us of the consciousness of these entities. The process requires our being freed from all inherited and acquired egotistical attachments and is therefore by no means easy to pursue.

The average man is afraid to go through a process which to begin with will make him utterly empty. Everything in man revolts against being thus given up, and he has to pass through an extremely uncomfortable state of mind till there is reached the preparedness for being filled with new contents. The turning point is indicated when there arises within us a new spiritual



impulse which cannot be compared with anything known before. It is as if we become conscious of the spirit which has been directing us unconsciously ever since our birth. The atmosphere is cleared as after a thunderstorm and all dullness and darkness disappears. We constitute ourselves anew with the all-pervading entities or *tattwas* such as air, light and the rest. We enter as new-born upon a new life. Wherever we may be, we feel ourselves to be in the middle of the world. Whatever we do has its origin from the whole.

Now Anthroposophy holds that experiences like these reveal something of the true nature of the "I", of the innermost being of man. Ideas or logical conceptions taken from the standpoint of ordinary life will never help suitably to express them. To speak adequately about higher realities higher experiences are necessary. Man needs to be reborn in order to realise and express the true nature of man. By the experiences thus gained Anthroposophy proves the truth of the pre-existence of man's eternal nature. And this ground being touched, there follows necessarily the realisation of its immortality after the cessation of this life. The great spiritual impetus can never be exhausted by only one life. It must strive for new reincarnations to fulfil its inherent purpose.

Doctrines may sometimes appear very similar, whereas their life is somewhat different. This is the case with this doctrine of reincarnation as now revealed anew to the West. It is not so much a passive acknowledgment of the "wheel of *karma*," as the active display of the higher "I" which we really are. Therefore we do not shrink from it, but rather welcome it as the means of developing ourselves according to the spiritual impulse that has become active in us. The "path" or method by which man may strive after his higher and truer "I" necessarily requires its continuation in further lives. It is not only that the spiritual task lying before man can never be accomplished within the short space of only one human life, but all the dictates of man's non-egotistical, spiritual, higher "I" are concerned with this earth. To this earth, therefore he has to come back and will come back.

If I have now to attempt a brief statement of the view of Anthroposophy on the destiny or "final goal" of the individual soul, you will permit me a little more figurative language. Such a vision,—for it only can be a vision,—requires an artistic or poetical sense, if it is to be grasped at all. In Europe, though not so much in India, nothing is more condemned than an artistic mind in matters philosophical. There, according to the dominant view in the West, logic must reign supreme. But it may be that in later times such a restriction of philosophy will be looked upon more as indicating lack of true intuition than any necessary limitation of human knowledge.



An Anthroposophical "doctrine" of reincarnation emanates, as I have shown, from a living understanding of the human "I". Repeated incarnation is a "logical" consequence of its innermost spiritual activity. That activity is not, like material forces, exhausted by repeated efforts, but grows ever stronger and stronger, accumulating through its successive lives a substance of its own. This is no mere belief but an actual experience resulting from the awakening of a new living consciousness within us. All spiritual experiences shape themselves into a self-constituent being, and form fresh appendages to the "I". This further reveals the hope that in future these realisations will no longer be rare and broken as now, but form the continuous and natural basis of a higher existence. However such a state of being be called,—angel, god or superman,—it is a true spiritual life where there is no more the same gulf between what we are and what we are to be. If this be accepted as a living vision, then we bear within us our final goal, the great destiny evolving from all our strivings and sacrifices devoted to it.

I have not mentioned upto now one fact which is inseparably connected with what I have said. It is the figure of Christ,—its leading and principal feature. It should be understood that Christ is not only the great prophet teaching and dying on the cross in Palestine, of whom the missionaries preach. That was his life, the individual life of the body. But Christ after death has risen again and as such he is personally present among us in the spirit, that is to say, within the spiritual sphere to which we belong, and which we strive to attain in full consciousness and being.

Whatever I have said about the expansion to the higher "I" and the attainment within us of an "angel" state stands in constant relation to Christ. The impetus as which the "I" reveals itself to us is itself spirit of his own spirit. Without being touched and led by him we could never be active and non-egotistical at the same time; we could never be sure that we were not unwittingly missing our direction. This danger is exemplified in the times before Christ, especially in the Indian doctrines, when it was held that the "I" could be found only by separation from active work, by throwing all energy into the great quietness. But, after Christ has risen again, we have his spiritual assistance in the "Grace" without which nothing can be done on the spiritual path. He is the co-ordinating factor in which all realisations are centred. It is in the consciousness of his presence that we enjoy the angelic state of the higher beings who are that they should be. As he has sacrificed himself for the earth to which he came back in his risen body, so he wants from us the same. What he has done within one life, we shall have to approach through the coming ages.



There is one thing more to be said. Up to now I have only mentioned what Christ is for us in the spiritual path of our personal development and perfection. But there remains the great outer sphere,—Nature, material world, gross substance,—however you may call it. It would not be possible for us to become spiritualised, if Nature is to remain what she is. Nature must be uplifted to the same degree as we advance to our "Christ goal." Our individual function in respect of this is but small and limited. The "risen" Christ, as the great Spirit of Nature, has himself undertaken the great task of bringing Nature back to himself. What we do,—by his help,—for ourselves, he is doing for the whole world. He is the objective "saviour"—but not without and apart from us. What we realise within us, is given an objective consequence through him.

Anthroposophy, as its name indicates (*Anthroposophia*—wisdom) puts man as a spiritual-physical being in the centre of all investigations. A true conception of man is the key to a true conception of the world. Such an understanding, moreover, leads to the revelation of Christ who is the living synthesis of both. Therefore Anthroposophy is essentially Christian, not as an exponent of any church, but on a new conception of life and nature.

The importance of this great new spiritual movement of Europe cannot be gauged merely from the number of its present followers. Suffice it that there are among them active and creative personalities. It remains to be seen what influence this great enterprise will be able to command, standing as it does against the overwhelming onrush of the materialism in the West. It is in any event a significant and hopeful beginning which I trust will find sympathisers in India also.

## SISTER NIVEDITA

AN IMPRESSION OF EARLIER YEARS

BY ERIC HAMMOND

Some quarter of a century ago, Miss Margaret Noble, afterwards Sister Nivedita, conducted a school for girls at Wimbledon, a suburb of London. She possessed a notable faculty for imparting knowledge, and, also notably, a faculty for selecting and advising efficient teachers. Alive from head to foot, vibrant with intellectual energy, endowed with a personality which attracted and dominated, she inspired her pupils with enthusiasm. Her love of literature was evidenced not only by wide reading, but by quick apprehension of the author's meaning. Her voice was singularly musical; her articulation admirable.



It is possible even to-day to recognise her scholars by the clarity of their enunciation, so determined was she that every syllable should receive its just value. Her love of literature was emphasised when, as long since as 1890, she gathered kindred spirits around her and, with them, founded the Wimbledon Literary Society, which alas, has lately written "finis" on its records.

She adored originality and smiled at customary conventions. Parents of her pupils were sometimes aggrieved by her attitude, as when, for instance, she persisted on retaining a bronze of Buddha on the mantelpiece of her studio. She revelled in argument, in disputation. Nothing gave her greater delight than a debate during which speakers became heated and excited. From time to time, on such occasions, she would interpolate some striking utterance calculated to stimulate the combatants, and the fiercer the fight the happier she grew. She admired Walt Whitman, Emerson and Thoreau, quoting with earnest emphasis any passages from the last two authors which endorsed Eastern philosophy. For Buddha and his teaching her reverence was great. The popular presentation of Christianity lost its appeal to her and thus, when Swami Vivekananda arrived in London, she responded to his call as a harp responds to the touch of a master-player. She listened to him at her club, the Sesame ; at Miss Müller's, Wimbledon ; at many religious and philosophical centres in and near London. Everywhere she went she hailed him as the Prophet of the age. She assisted his appearance at various places, including the Christo-Theosophical Society established by Sir Richard Stapley in Bloomsbury Square, where, by the bye, Swami Abhedananda made his maiden speech in English. There is no doubt that her influence and her persuasive faith, backed by Mr. W. T. Sturdy's solidity of aim and pecuniary aid, largely contributed to Swamiji's career in London. Immersed as she came to be in the Vedanta, she employed all her oratorical power on its behalf. Once caught in Vivekananda's wonderful web, she spoke of him and about him unceasingly. "Have you seen and heard the Swami?" she would ask. "If you have not seen him and heard him, you simply must. There is no one like him, no one to equal him, no one at all!" Eloquent, persistent, imperious, she drew friends, acquaintances, even strangers, towards this Son of India who was, she assured them, the Sun of Truth. Her acceptance of, and adhesion to, the Swami's gospel was whole-hearted. It is true, however, that, when the time came for her consideration of leaving for India and devoting herself and her ability to the cause there, she experienced a very natural hesitancy. With the present writer she frequently referred to reasons for and against the proposal. If she went to India with that purpose, she must trust others to



cherish her aging mother ; she must relinquish all those interests for which London claimed her and for which she was endowed with peculiar fitness. Above all, she must endure harsh misinterpretation of her motive, and suspicion and disapproval on the part of the majority of her Christian connections. On the other hand, she realised that "the call had come to her," with clarion sound. It abode with her. It rang in her hearing through the hours and through the days. Finally, not without intense spiritual struggle, she accepted the inevitable renunciation, and, in a phrase, "burnt her boats"; burnt them, because she was assured that, whatever might occur, she could never return to the old home, the old ways, the old familiar friends, except perhaps for an occasional brief vacation from the work to which she would wed herself. Swamiji, whose heart yearned towards his devoted disciple, felt his own responsibility in the matter profoundly. With his unyielding honesty he urged upon her all possible arguments against her discipleship and her intention to follow him in his mission and to share in its consequent hardships. He accentuated the bitter words and actions of many who would misconstrue her association with him and his fellow monks.

At this juncture we are confronted by a remarkable factor. Margaret Noble was essentially a woman's woman. Her temperament, her sympathies, her personality, all tended to attract persons of her own sex. These, of all ages, from children to adults, and to elders, admired her, reflected her. Men, on the contrary, seldom, if ever, experienced this attraction. Some subtle wizardry of soul held men-folk aloof from her.

She appeared, indeed, to enjoy this attribute of hers ; to find joy in stinging them with a lash of caustic criticism ; in making them comprehend that, in her consciousness, women occupied a loftier level on the mental sphere than man was destined to attain. Thus it was, happily, plainly palpable, that her allegiance to the Swami was not in any wise coerced by his masculinity. It was, rather, the spirit within him ; the spirit of India ancient and abiding ; the spirit that had subsisted through centuries of changing dynasty and dominion ; the spirit which clung to unflinching faith in "That that exists, though men call it variously" ; it was this by which Margaret Noble was claimed and to which she, too, clung tenaciously. Aided by Mrs. Ole Bull, widow of the world-famous violinist, and Miss Josephine McLeod ; befriended by Sir J. C. Bose, she sailed for Hindustan. The lure of adventure beckoned her, and indomitable courage sustained her. Of her work in India much has been told and much will be told in time to come. A period of probation awaited her, followed by initiation. Margaret Noble, as Sister Nivedita, earned due rank as an outstanding personage among those historic figures whose



belief in India's spiritual message to the world made its supreme appeal.

Her portrait, at the period of her sailing, shows us a young but distinctive woman with luminous grey-blue eyes, with hair of light golden brown, with a complexion radiant in its clearness; with a smile ingratiating and alluring. Of medium height; alert in every muscle and movement; eager, enterprising, dauntless. She derived from, and was proud of, Irish ancestry, and, generous, impulsive, ardent, she embodied much of the charm, the power of ready speech, the fascination of the Celt at his best. All this she carried from the Emerald Isle, by way to England, to India, the home of her adoption.

### " INDIAN PHILOSOPHY " \*

The long looked-for second volume of Prof. S. Radhakrishnan's *Indian Philosophy* reached us duly. We accord a hearty welcome to this noble work of labour and love. The publication of such books is symptomatic of cultural reawakening. And we who fervently believe in India's future, eagerly welcome these treatises inasmuch as they are sure to hasten India's resumption of the role of a world-teacher by bringing to light many precious gems of thoughts that now lie submerged in the national consciousness.

Prof. Radhakrishnan's luminous exposition of Indian philosophy is meant for those who have neither time nor patience nor ability to go through the extensive commentaries of the six systems and the many theistic philosophies that grew and have been growing on the soil of India. The philosophical literature of India is vast, and it often baffles the attempts of readers to arrange the problems of Metaphysics systematically and grasp them thoroughly. The learned professor has tried to compress in this volume the cardinal doctrines of the six systems of Hindu philosophy and the tenets of the Sākta, the Saiva and the later Vaishnava theism. A number of scholars, Indian and Western, have attempted the subjects problem-wise and to give a complete view of them. Our author has the advantage of coming after them. He has made the best use of the existing materials, often English renderings and interpretations. It was one of his tasks to arrange and criticise them; this he has done in a splendid manner. His command over the English language, choice of fine expressions and acquaintance with the Eastern and

\* *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II by Prof. S. Radhakrishnan, King George V Professor of Philosophy, University of Calcutta. George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, 40 Museum Street, London, W.C. 1. Pp. 797. Price 25/- net.



Western systems of thought have invested the work with an unusual charm and value.

The work is marked with the following features :

(1) Every topic has been treated historically and critically. The historico-critical treatment has given it a high status among works of the same kind. All the systems of thought have been traced back to the Upanishads. How they have been modified by the changing times and influences have been clearly shown. Continuity and clearness of thought have not suffered.

(2) In showing the development of the Nyâya, Sâmkhya and Purva Mimânsâ, the author has started with the atheistic tendencies of each system and culminated in their theism. This change he has explained as a compromise between metaphysical speculation and popular demands. The idea of the personal God has played a very subordinate part in all the six systems. In some it is denied, in others it is neglected. It is more a regulative principle than a metaphysical reality. But in the theological schools of dualism and qualified monism, God is the centre of thought and existence.

(3) The unity of the systems has not been lost sight of. Only common elements have been pointed out, though the synthetic aspect of Reality has been overlooked.

(4) Transcendental and empirical realities have been subjected to the same considerations of logic, and as a result the whole work has been brought down to the level of Empirical Metaphysics i.e. Philosophy in the Western sense. Brahman, Atman, Purusha, Prakriti, Absolute, Infinite, etc. have been treated from a purely realistic standpoint. They have been considered and criticised as if they are physical and mental phenomena. Reason has not only tested but subordinated everything to its rule.

(5) The Western method of exposition has been followed. Apt quotations from Western savants have been often made use of. The different problems of metaphysics have not been jumbled up. Similar notions that often confuse readers have been generally compared and contrasted. The views of Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Vallabha, etc. have been contrasted wherever necessary, and those of Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Bradley, Bergson, etc. have been compared with those of Kapila, Gautama, Badarayana, Sankara, Ramanuja, etc.

(6) The author has maintained the position of an interpreter and not that of a free writer as is the case with some modern commentators. He has tried to be faithful as far as possible, though it cannot be denied that he has also been influenced by Western critics on many points. The modern idea of disinterested public service asserts itself wherever the practical aspects of religion is discussed.

(7) The standpoint of the author seems to be the Ideal



Realism of the Hegelian school. The nature of ultimate realities is considered to be rather objective than subjective. German Idealism combined with the qualified monism of Ramanuja seems to be the stronghold in which he is stationed.

The professor is a man of vast study. Though Western philosophy has struck a deep root in him, he has a deeper love and respect for his national culture. He has no doubt quoted many authors to support his exposition, but he has also criticised some, e.g., Max Muller & Deussen, whenever they have gone astray.

Students of Western philosophy often suffer under a great misconception when they deal with Indian thoughts. They acquire an easy tendency to interpret everything Eastern in the light of Western thought and culture. Nothing is more deplorable than this. Even our best writers are not free from this defect. Indian thoughts are good, they concede, because, forsooth, they resemble or anticipated European thoughts. This seems to be their standard of judgment. The reason is clear ;—these lovers of knowledge are greatly influenced by Western ideas and they naturally and unconsciously lose sight of the point of view from which things Indian have been seen and said by our indigenous scholars. An interpreter of Indian thought should in the first place lead his reader to the centre of Indian life and show how the soul of India has found expression in various ways and forms. Prof. Radhakrishnan is an apostle of Hindu culture as is evidenced by his beautiful lectures on the "Hindu View of Life" and by his defence of Hindu doctrines against alien criticism. He has stated intuition or superconsciousness to be the starting point of the Hindu systems of thought. But he too, we are afraid, has not taken a synthetic view of the six systems, and has failed to treat the problems from the true standpoint which he has himself stated in these words: "The philosophy of India takes its stand on the spirit which is above mere logic, and holds that culture based on mere logic or science may be efficient, but cannot be inspiring." We should no doubt treat these systems separately, but we should not forget at the same time to posit them in their right places in the grand synthesis that the different Hindu philosophies together represent. Unless we show that each system is an attempt to look at the Whole from a particular level of experience, our purpose will be defeated. For, (i) if the sources of the Sutras are revealed truths, derived from superconscious experience, as the professor admits in a way, they have no value if they contradict one another ; and (ii) the three Prasthânas of Hindu philosophy,—the Nyaya Prasthana, the Samkhya Prasthana and the Mimamsa Prasthana,—represent but three different standpoints from which Reality has been viewed ;—they are physical, psychical and causal



respectively. When one system is criticised by another, that is done mostly by commentators who are men of intellect rather than of vision. When intellect seeks to interpret Reality in terms of mental categories, differences are inevitable. Some apparent contradictions are no doubt due to the angle of vision that differs with individuals. Reality is undivided and admits of no difference in kind ; but experience has many planes, higher and lower. Truth reveals itself to the experiencing soul on many planes. The Kundalini Yoga makes this fact very clear. Probably some such considerations led Vijnanabhiṣku to form a synthetic view of the six systems. "Thus the different systems are not really opposed to one another, but are an attempt to reach ultimate Truth by adapting themselves to a graduated scale of understanding. They are like three concentric circles, the outer circle corresponding to the Vaiśeṣika and the Nyāya, which explains the mystery of the outer world by labelling its contents under certain categories and their subordinate genera. The middle circle represents the Sāṃkhya which brings all the categories of the external world under a single head viz. Prakṛiti. But it does not similarly succeed in integrating the world of Puruṣas whose ultimate plurality is, after all, allowed. Now, the human mind is essentially a unity and it gets no peace and satisfaction till it has reduced the entire plurality of things external and internal to the unity of a single principle or reality. This is the task of Vedānta Philosophy which thus corresponds to the innermost circle. The Vedānta is thus like a field enclosed and protected by double fence, a temple that is approached through two outer court-yards."

We must have a clear idea of the relative position of reason and revelation (or intuition) in Indian philosophy before we can truly understand and appreciate it. Westerners have accepted only reason while Hindus have combined both. Knowledge advances by passing from the known to the unknown. How? The Western philosophy has adopted the inductive method of hypothesis and verification, while the Indian philosophy that of revelation and interpretation. The former assumes consistency to be the standard of truth and confines philosophy to the empirical aspect of Reality, while the latter deals with truth in its infinite aspects, one apparently clashing with the other, but every aspect leading to and culminating in one transcendental reality, the Absolute, the meeting ground of all seeming contradictions. This does not mean inconsistency ; but consistency is only one of its phases. Whatever comes within the grasp of reason should be supported by reason ; but it would be a mistake to reason out the transcendental truths. The Rishis of the Upanishads simply stated them ; Buddha kept quiet ; the Sūtrakāras or compilers gave



hints ; Sankara quoted scriptures, using reason mostly for destructive purposes. Whenever any commentator has tried to reason them out, he has been involved in self-contradiction. As for instance, pure monism cannot be stated in terms of reason, for a second principle, called *Maya*, has to be taken for granted. By the way, we find that the professor feels a little uncomfortable at some of Sankara's arguments tending to subjectivism. But Sankara is not a Subjective Idealist like Berkeley. The world, according to Sankara, has Brahman for its substratum, so it is not illusory ; but when the ultimate Reality (*Pāramārthika Sattā*) is realised, the world of appearances vanishes. The world is not real in the sense of the scientific Realism of Locke and Reid, Spencer and Huxley.

How to have an intuition of truth ?—it may be asked. This indeed is one of the main problems of Hindu Darshana. All the systems have laid down certain practical measures for transcending body and mind. This practical aspect gives start to metaphysical speculations. When superconscious experiences are subordinated to reason, Hindu Darshana is deprived of its special characteristics and primal glory. Commentators are intellectualists, they have often distorted truth by over-intellectualism and self-assertion. By Darshana we mean statement of superconscious experiences and their faithful interpretation. The commentators have lowered Darshana to Philosophy. Realisation of truth, straight and simple, and not mere depths of thought for its own sake, is the watchword of Indian life. To miss this fact is to miss the main inspiration of Indian philosophy. Many modern interpreters of Indian life and thought, we regret to say, have been guilty of this defect. It is a pleasure to find that Prof. Radhakrishnan has not forgotten the intuitive basis of Indian thought and has defended many of its characteristics with consummate skill. But we wish he had gone farther. The learned professor has done very well to compare and contrast some of the basic principles with Western thoughts. As for instance, Brahman has been compared with the 'Things-in-themselves' of Kant, 'Absolute Ego' of Fichte, and 'That' of Bradley. His comparative study is illuminating ; he has ably distinguished Brahman from these others ; but the distinction would have been brought to a clearer relief, if he had shown that Brahman is a metaphysical intuition, rather revealed than conceived.

The Samkhya system of thought which has won widespread recognition for its highly developed psychology and cosmology, has been treated with imperfect sympathy. We are made to feel diffident from the very beginning about the value of Samkhya. Conscious Purusha and unconscious Prakriti can never come into contact. It is very much to be doubted if the human mind can ever understand the conscious and the



unconscious states of Purusha and Prakriti. For our utmost understanding of the subject and the object can be only in so far as they are conceived by the Buddhi, the first evolute of Prakriti. The principles of Prakriti and Purusha which are beyond Buddhi cannot be comprehended by the human mind, for human categories stop at Buddhi. These can be accepted as metaphysical realities,—subjects of intuition. In the Advaita Vedānta also the conception of Jivātma which is the self-conscious Atman supposed to have been enveloped by the darkness of Avidya, is no less a mystery than the relation of Prakriti and Purusha.

The mechanical teleology of Sāṃkhya might be compared with Schopenhauer's and Hartman's theory of the unconscious will. The dualism of Sāṃkhya is based on the theory of causality. This theory therefore could have been more fully discussed, and the different views held by the Buddhist schools, Nyāya, Sāṃkhya and Vedānta could have been elaborately put forth.

The change from atheism to theism in Sāṃkhya has been thus accounted for: "The later thinkers found it impossible to account for this harmony between the needs of Purusha and the acts of Prakriti, and so attribute the function of guiding the development of Prakriti, by removing the barriers, to God." He quotes Vachaspati, Vijñānabhikṣu and Nāgārjuna on this point. It should be noted here that these changes are found in commentators and not in the original treatises of Sāṃkhya.

Prof. Radhakrishnan maintains that throughout the Sāṃkhya there is a confusion between the Purusha and the Jiva. This confusion, we think, is not so great in the Sūtras as in their interpreters.

The relation of Purusha and Buddhi is a difficult problem; the confusion has been all the more confounded by the theory of reflection. It required a lucid treatment. But it is not clearly shown in the book which is the reflector and which the reflected. The following lines indicate: "Because of the transparency of prakriti in her sattva part, the purusha reflected therein mistakes the sense of self-hood and agency (abhimāna) of prakriti as belonging to itself." But a few lines below: "Bondage is the reflection in purusha of the impurities of Buddhi."

The Advaita Vedānta of Sāṅkara has been clearly interpreted, supported and criticised wherever necessary. Sāṅkara excites wonder and admiration, but love and reverence is for Ramanuja. Says the author: "Sāṅkara's system is unmatched for its metaphysical depth and logical power. Thought follows thought naturally, until Advaitism is seen to complete and crown the edifice. . . . Sāṅkara holds up a vision of life acceptable in the highest moments of poetry and religion, when



we are inclined to sympathise with his preference for intuition to the light of the understanding. So long as he remains on this high ground, he is unanswerable." But thus in connection with Ramanuja's Theism: "The speculations of philosophers which do not comfort us in our stress and suffering, are mere intellectual diversion and not serious thinking. The Absolute of Sankara, rigid, motionless and totally lacking in initiative or influence, cannot call forth our worship. Like the Taj Mahal, which is unconscious of the admiration it arouses, the Absolute remains indifferent to the fear and love of its worshippers, and for all those who regard the goal of religion as the goal of philosophy—to know God is to know the real—Sankara's view seems to be a finished example of learned error. . . . The world is said to be an appearance and God a bloodless Absolute dark with the excess of light." These remarks appear to be a little self-contradictory and presuppose that religion is not possible with the Absolute as its background. The author, we are afraid, has been carried away by feeling: a thing which is established by reason appears to be an error, simply because it does not satisfy popular demand! One must not forget that a timid heart cannot know even Personal God; and where there is strength and fearlessness, the Absolute is not dark with the excess of light.

His treatment of Sankara would have been more complete if he had touched upon the following points:

(1) There are certain similar ideas in Sankara Vedanta and Buddhism, they often create confusion; e.g., the Atman of Sankara and the Bhutatman of the Mahayanic School, the Brahman of Vedanta and the Bhutatathata of Buddhism, Mukti and Nirvana. They should have been clearly distinguished.

(2) The theory of creation has been incompletely treated. The aggregate and syggregate evolution of Brahman have not been touched at all.

(3) The doctrine of Maya and the theory of ignorance (Avidya) require a fuller treatment. Many theories on these have not been stated and discussed. How Sankara retorts to his opponents in defining Maya as *anirvachaniya*, ought to have been stated. Whether ignorance is a positive entity or not should also have been made clear.

(4) The different schools of Vedanta, specially the later Vedanta schools, have no doubt been referred to in connection with Sankara; but they should have been treated separately and more fully.

(5) The Kalpanâ-vâda of *Yoga-vâsistha* should have been stated and discussed in connection with Sankara; for according to some scholars, *Yoga-vasistha* was written before Sankara



and he was as much influenced by *Yoga-vasistha* as by the *Māndukya-Kārikā* of Gaudapada.

(6) The conceptions of God and soul in Vedānta ought to have been compared with those of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika.

The learned author, with whom philosophy is not mere intellectual gymnastics, emphasises the practical aspect of Vedānta: "The highest intelligence, according to him (Sāṅkara) consists in the knowledge that intelligence alone is not enough. . . . Brahmajñāna is the spiritual realisation of our rootedness in the eternal, which remains an abiding possession, a part of our being." "What counts is not outer conduct but inner life. Its torturing problems cannot be solved by a reference to rules. Our secret hearts, our prayers and meditations help us to solve the problems of life." "Religion for Sāṅkara is not doctrine or ceremony, but life and experience."

The author's treatment of Rāmaṇuja has been quite clear; he has fully brought out the epistemological significances of Rāmaṇuja and Sāṅkara, pointing out their differences. But the criticism offered by Rāmaṇuja on the doctrine of *Māyā* has been insufficiently stated: it is finished in one paragraph. He has done well in treating the *Sūtras* apart. But he might attempt to show whose interpretation approaches nearest to the *Sūtras*.

The chapter on Śaiva, Śākta and Vaiṣṇava theism, comprehending the living faiths of India, has been too short. An elaborate treatment is essential. The principles of Śiva, Śakti, Śaṣaśiva, Iśvara and the *Suddha-māyā* of the Śaivas corresponding to those of Brahman, Śakti, *Nāda*, *Bindu* and the *Suddha-māyā* of the Śaktas are not easy to comprehend. The more they are explained, the better. In some of the passages it is not clear whether Śakti is one with or different from *Suddha-māyā*.

Some leading doctrines of the Pancharātra School, those of Mādhva, Nimbarka, Vallabha, etc., have been stated and compared; but they have not been sufficiently discussed. The Chaitanya school of Bengal has found a place, but has not been properly dealt with. The contributions of each school should have been fairly emphasised. No attempt has been made to interpret the theories of *Svarūpa-śakti*, *Tatastha-śakti* and *Māyā-śakti*, and the synthesis attempted by the Chaitanya school. Rāmaṇuja's theory of attributes that soul and matter are attributes of God and the theory of Śakti that *Prakṛiti* is the outer energy of God, as propounded by Jīva and Baladeva, should have been fully discussed. According to Prof. Rādhakṛiṣṇan, the doctrine of *Achintabhedābheda* of Chaitanya is nearer to Rāmaṇuja's qualified monism than to Mādhva's dualism. Historically, however, the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas belong to the



Madhva school, though their leanings are neither towards the emphasis of difference as with Madhva, nor towards identity as with Ramanuja, they remain equitable. The last section\* of the author's Conclusion, in which he points out the direction of India's future philosophical development, deserves careful attention. He mentions a few names as partly foreshadowing it. But why is the name of Swami Vivekananda omitted. Surely no modern Indian mind so fully and clearly reflects it as his.

In spite of the few short-comings pointed out above, the book, the only one of its kind existing, has many excellent features which can hardly be over-estimated. Like the author's other works, this also will be specially helpful to Western readers. It will surely add to his already established reputation as a great interpreter of Hindu thought.

U. C. D.

## DARWIN'S THEORY OF MAN'S DESCENT AS IT STANDS TO-DAY

BY PROF. SIR ARTHUR KEITH, M.D., D.SC., LL.D., F.R.S.

(Concluded from the last issue)

We made another mistake. Seeing that in our search for Man's ancestry we expected to reach an age when the beings we should have to deal with would be simian rather than human, we ought to have marked the conditions which prevail amongst living anthropoid apes. We ought to have been prepared to find, as we approached a distant point in the geological horizon, that the forms encountered would be as widely different as are the gorilla, chimpanzee and orang, and confined, as these great anthropoids now are, to limited parts of the earth's surface. That is what we are now realising ; as we go backwards in time we discover that mankind becomes broken up, not into separate races as in the world of to-day, but into numerous and separate species. When we go into a still more remote past they become so unlike that we have to regard them not as belonging to separate species but different genera. It is amongst this welter of extinct fossil forms which strew the ancient world that we have to trace the zigzag line of Man's descent. Do you wonder we sometimes falter and follow false clues ?

We committed a still further blunder when we set out on the search for Man's ancestry : indeed, some of us are still

\* We hope to be able to quote it in some future issue.—Ed.



making it. We expected that Man's evolution would pursue not only an orderly file of stages but that every part of his body—skull, brain, jaws, teeth, skin, body, arms, and legs—would at each stage become a little less ape-like, a little more Man-like. Our searches have shown us that Man's evolution has not proceeded in this orderly manner. In some extinct races, while one part of the body has moved forwards another part has lagged behind. Let me illustrate this point because it is important. We now know that, as Darwin sat in his study at Down, there lay hidden at Piltdown, in Sussex, not thirty miles distant from him, sealed up in a bed of gravel, a fossil human skull and jaw. In 1912, thirty years after Darwin's death, Mr. Charles Dawson discovered this skull and my friend Sir Arthur Smith Woodward described it, and rightly recognised that skull and jaw were parts of the same individual, and that this individual had lived, as was determined by geological and other evidence, in the opening phase of the Pleistocene period. We may confidently presume that this individual was representative of the people who inhabited England at this remote date. The skull, although deeply mineralised and thick-walled, might well have been the rude forerunner of a modern skull, but the lower jaw was so ape-like that some experts denied that it went with the human fossil skull at all, and supposed it to be the lower jaw of some extinct kind of chimpanzee. This mistake would never have been made if those concerned had studied the comparative anatomy of anthropoid apes. Such a study would have prepared them to meet with the discordances of evolution. The same irregularity in the progression of parts is evident in the anatomy of *Pithecanthropus*, the oldest and most primitive form of humanity so far discovered. The thigh-bone might easily be that of modern man, the skull-cap that of an ape, but the brain within that cap, as we now know, had passed well beyond an anthropoid status. If merely a lower jaw had been found at Piltdown an ancient Englishman would have been wrongly labelled 'Higher anthropoid ape'; if only the thigh-bone of *Pithecanthropus* had come to light in Java, then an ancient Javanese, almost deserving the title of anthropoid, would have passed muster as a man.

Such examples illustrate the difficulties and dangers which beset the task of unravelling Man's ancestry. There are other difficulties; there still remain great blanks in the geological record of Man's evolution. As our search proceeds these blanks will be filled in, but in the meantime let us note their nature and their extent. By the discovery of fossil remains we have followed Man backwards to the close of the Pliocene—a period which endured at least for a quarter of a million years, but we have not yet succeeded in tracing him through this



period. It is true that we have found fossil teeth in Pliocene deposits which may be those of an ape-like man or of a man-like ape ; until we find other parts of their bodies we cannot decide. When we pass into the still older Miocene period—one which was certainly twice as long as the Pliocene—we are in the heyday of anthropoid history. Thanks to the labours of Dr. Guy E. Pilgrim, of the Indian Geological Survey, we know already of a dozen different kinds of great anthropoids which lived in Himalayan jungles during middle and later Miocene times ; we know of at least three other kinds of great anthropoids which lived in the contemporary jungles of Europe. Unfortunately we have found as yet only the most resistant parts of their bodies—teeth and fragments of jaw. Do some of these fragments represent a human ancestor? We cannot decide until a lucky chance brings to light a limb-bone or a piece of skull, but no one can compare the teeth of these Miocene anthropoids with those of primitive man, as has been done so thoroughly by Prof. William K. Gregory, and escape the conviction that in the dentitions of the extinct anthropoids of the Miocene jungles we have the ancestral forms of human teeth.

It is useless to go to strata still older than the Miocene in search of Man's emergence ; in such strata we have found only fossil traces of emerging anthropoids. All the evidence now at our disposal supports the conclusion that Man has arisen, as Lamarck and Darwin suspected, from an anthropoid ape not higher in the zoological scale than a chimpanzee, and that the date at which human and anthropoid lines of descent began to diverge lies near the beginning of the Miocene period. On our modest scale of reckoning, that gives Man the respectable antiquity of about one million years.

Our geological search, which I have summarised all too briefly, has not produced so far the final and conclusive evidence of Man's anthropoid origin ; we have not found as yet the human *imago* emerging from its anthropoid encasement. Why, then, do modern anthropologists share the conviction that there has been an anthropoid stage in our ancestry? They are no more blind than you are to the degree of difference which separates Man and ape in structure, in appearance and in behaviour. I must touch on the sources of this conviction only in a passing manner. Early in the present century Prof. G. H. F. Nuttall, of Cambridge University, discovered a trustworthy and exact method of determining the affinity of one species of animal to another by comparing the reactions of their blood. He found that the blood of Man and that of the great anthropoid apes gave almost the same reaction. Bacteriologists find that the living anthropoid body possesses almost the same susceptibilities to infections, and manifests the same reactions, as does the body



of Man. So alike are the brains of Man and anthropoid in their structural organisation that surgeons and physiologists transfer experimental observations from the one to the other. When the human embryo establishes itself in the womb it throws out structures of a most complex nature to effect a connection with the maternal body. We now know that exactly the same elaborate processes occur in the anthropoid womb and in no other. We find the same vestigial structures—the same 'evolutionary post-marks'—in the bodies of Man and anthropoid. The anthropoid mother fondles, nurses and suckles her young in the human manner. This is but a tithe of the striking and intimate points in which Man resembles the anthropoid ape. In what other way can such a myriad of coincidences be explained except by presuming a common ancestry for both?

The crucial chapters in Darwin's *Descent of Man* are those in which he seeks to give a historical account of the rise of Man's brain and of the varied functions which that organ subserves. How do these chapters stand to-day? Darwin was not a professional anatomist and therefore accepted Huxley's statement that there was no structure in the human brain that was not already present in that of the anthropoid. In Huxley's opinion the human brain was but a richly annotated edition of the simpler and older anthropoid book, and that this edition, in turn, was but the expanded issue of the still older original primate publication. Since this statement was made thousands of anatomists and physiologists have studied and compared the brain of Man and ape; only a few months ago Prof. G. Elliot Smith summarised the result of this intensive enquiry as follows: 'No structure found in the brain of an ape is lacking in the human brain, and, on the other hand, the human brain reveals no formation of *any sort* that is not present in the brain of the gorilla or chimpanzee. . . . The only distinctive feature of the human brain is a quantitative one.' The difference is only quantitative but its importance cannot be exaggerated. In the anthropoid brain are to be recognised all those parts which have become so enormous in the human brain. It is the expansion of just those parts which have given Man his powers of feeling, understanding, acting, speaking and learning.

Darwin himself approached this problem not as an anatomist but as a psychologist, and after many years of painstaking and exact observation, succeeded in convincing himself that, immeasurable as are the differences between the mentality of Man and ape, they are of degree, not of kind. Prolonged researches made by modern psychologists have but verified and extended Darwin's conclusions. No matter what line of evidence we select to follow—evidence gathered by anatomists, by embryologists, by physiologists, or by psychologists—we reach the conviction that Man's brain has been evolved from that of an



anthropoid ape and that in the process no new structure has been introduced and no new or strange faculty interpolated.

In these days our knowledge of the elaborate architecture and delicate machinery of the human brain makes rapid progress, but I should mislead if I suggested that finality is in sight. Far from it ; our enquiries are but begun. There is so much we do not yet understand. Will the day ever come when we can explain why the brain of man has made such great progress while that of his cousin the gorilla has fallen so far behind? Can we explain why inherited ability falls to one family and not to another, or why, in the matter of cerebral endowment, one race of mankind has fared so much better than another? We have as yet no explanation to offer, but an observation made twenty years ago by one on whom Nature has showered great gifts—a former President of this Association and the doyen of British zoologists—Sir E. Ray Lankester—deserves quotation in this connection: 'The leading feature in the development and separation of Man from other animals is undoubtedly the relative enormous size of the brain in Man and the corresponding increase in its activities and capacity. It is a striking fact that it was not in the ancestors of Man alone that this increase in the size of the brain took place at this same period—the Miocene. Other great mammals of the early Tertiary period were in the same case.' When primates made their first appearance in geological records, they were, one and all, small-brained. We have to recognise that the tendency to increase of brain, which culminated in the production of the human organ, was not confined to Man's ancestry but appeared in diverse branches of the Mammalian stock at a corresponding period of the earth's history.

I have spoken of Darwin as a historian. To describe events and to give the order of their occurrence is the easier part of a historian's task ; his real difficulties begin when he seeks to interpret the happenings of history, to detect the causes which produced them, and explain why one event follows as a direct sequel to another. Up to this point we have been considering only the materials for Man's history, and placing them, so far as our scanty information allows, in the order of their sequence, but now we have to seek out the biological processes and controlling influences which have shaped the evolutionary histories of Man and ape. The evolution of new types of Man or of ape is one thing, and the evolution of new types of motor cars is another, yet for the purposes of clear thinking it will repay us to use the one example to illustrate the other. In the evolution of motor vehicles Darwin's law of Selection has prevailed ; there has been severe competition and the types which have answered best to the needs and tastes of the public have survived. The public has selected on two grounds—first



for utility, thus illustrating Darwin's law of Natural Selection, and secondly because of appearance's sake ; for, as most people know, a new car has to satisfy not only the utilitarian demands of its prospective master but also the æsthetic tastes of its prospective mistress, therein illustrating Darwin's second law—the law of Sexual Selection. That selection, both utilitarian and æsthetic, is producing an effect on modern races of mankind and in surviving kinds of ape, as Darwin supposed, cannot well be questioned. In recent centuries the inter-racial competition amongst men for the arable lands of the world is keener than in any known period of human history.

The public has selected its favoured types of car, but it has had no direct hand in designing and producing modifications and improvements which have appeared year after year. To understand how such modifications are produced the enquirer must enter a factory and not only watch artisans shaping and fitting parts together but also visit the designer's office. In this way an enquirer will obtain a glimpse of the machinery concerned in the evolution of motor cars. If we are to understand the machinery which underlies the evolution of Man and of ape, we have to enter the 'factories' where they are produced—look within the womb and see the ovum being transformed into an embryo, the embryo into a foetus, and the foetus into a babe. After birth we may note infancy passing into childhood, childhood into adolescence, adolescence into maturity, and maturity into old age. Merely to register the stages of change is not enough ; to understand the controlling machinery we have to search out and uncover the processes which are at work within developing and growing things and the influences which co-ordinate and control all the processes of development and of growth. When we have discovered the machinery of development and of growth we shall also know the machinery of Evolution ; for they are the same.

If the simile I have used would sound strange in Darwin's ear, could he hear it, the underlying meaning would be familiar to him. Over and over again he declared that he did not know how 'variations' were produced, favourable or otherwise ; nor could he have known, for in his time hormones were undreamt of and experimental embryology scarcely born. With these recent discoveries new vistas opened up for students of Evolution. The moment we begin to work out the simile I have used and compare the evolutionary machinery in a motor factory with that which regulates the development of an embryo within the womb, we realise how different the two processes are. Let us imagine for a moment what changes would be necessary were we to introduce 'embryological processes' into a car factory. We have to conceive a workshop teeming with clustering swarms of microscopic artisans, mere specks of living matter.



In one end of this factory we find swarms busy with cylinders, and as we pass along we note that every part of a car is in process of manufacture, each part being the business of a particular brigade of microspic workmen. There is no apprenticeship in this factory, every employee is born, just as a hive-bee is, with his skill already fully developed. No plans or patterns are supplied; every workman has the needed design in his head from birth. There is neither manager, overseer, nor foreman to direct and co-ordinate the activities of the vast artisan armies. And yet if parts are to fit when assembled, if pinions are to mesh and engines run smoothly, there must be some method of co-ordination. It has to be a method plastic enough to permit difficulties to be overcome when such are encountered and to permit the introduction of advantageous modifications when these are needed. A modern works manager would be hard put to were he asked to devise an automatic system of control for such a factory, yet it is just such a system that we are now obtaining glimpses of in the living workshops of Nature.

I have employed a crude simile to give the lay mind an inkling of what happens in that 'factory' where the most complicated of machines are forged—the human body and brain. The fertilised ovum divides and redivides; one brood of microscopic living units succeeds another, and as each is produced the units group themselves to form the 'parts' of an embryo. Each 'part' is a living society; the embryo is a huge congeries of interdependent societies. How are their respective needs regulated, their freedoms protected, and their manœuvres timed? Experimental embryologists have begun to explore and discover the machinery of regulation. We know enough to realise that it will take many generations of investigators to work over the great and new field which is thus opening up. When this is done we shall be in a better position to discuss the cause of 'variation' and the machinery of Evolution.

If we know only a little concerning the system of government which prevails in the developing embryo we can claim that the system which prevails in the growing body, as it passes from infancy to maturity, is becoming better known to us every year. The influence of the sex glands on the growth of the body has been known since ancient times; their removal in youth leads to a transformation in the growth of every part of the body, altering at the same time the reactions and temperament of the brain. In more recent years medical men have observed that characteristic alterations in the appearance and constitution of the human body can be produced by the action of other glands—the pituitary, thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenals. Under the disorderly action of one or other of these glands individuals may, in the course of a few years, take on so changed an appearance that the differences between them



and their fellows become as great as, or even greater than, those which separate one race of mankind from another. The physical characters which are thus altered are just those which mark one race off from another. How such effects are produced we did not know until 1904, when the late Prof. E. H. Starling, a leader amongst the great physiologists of our time, laid bare an ancient and fundamental law in the living animal body—his law of hormones. I have pictured the body of a growing child as an immense society made up of myriads of microscopic living units, ever increasing in numbers. One of the ways—probably the oldest and most important way—in which the activities of the communities of the body are co-ordinated and regulated is by the postal system discovered by Starling, wherein the missives are hormones—chemical substances in ultra-microscopic amounts, despatched from one community to another in the circulating blood. Clearly the discovery of this ancient and intricate system opens up fresh vistas to the student of Man's evolution. How Darwin would have welcomed this discovery! It would have given him a rational explanation to so many of his unsolved puzzles, including that of 'correlated variations.' Nor can I in this connection forbear to mention the name of one who presided so ably over the affairs of this Association fifteen years ago—Sir E. Sharpey-Schafer. He was the pioneer who opened up this field of investigation and has done more than anyone to place our knowledge of the nature and action of the glands of internal secretion on a precise basis of experimental observation. With such sources of knowledge being ever extended and others of great importance, such as the study of Heredity, which have been left unmentioned, we are justified in the hope that Man will be able in due time not only to write his own history but to explain how and why events took the course they did.

In a brief hour I have attempted to answer a question of momentous importance to all of us—What is Man's origin? Was Darwin right when he said that Man, under the action of biological forces which can be observed and measured, has been raised from a place amongst anthropoid apes to that which he now occupies? The answer is Yes! and in returning this verdict I speak but as foreman of the jury—a jury which has been empannelled from men who have devoted a lifetime to weighing the evidence. To the best of my ability I have avoided, in laying before you the evidence on which our verdict was found, the rôle of special pleader, being content to follow Darwin's own example—Let the Truth speak for itself.

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**Midnapore Scarcity Relief Work (July).** A centre was started at Pakinajita from where 4 weekly distributions of rice were given to 1077 distressed inhabitants of 45 villages. Total quantity of rice distributed was 136 mds.

**Receipts and Expenditure for the above two centres :—**

Received by donation Rs. 1,590-11-9. Sale proceeds of rice Rs. 4-15-0, from the Ramkrishna Mission Provident Relief Fund Rs. 2,401-8-3. Total Rs. 3,997-3-0.

**EXPENDITURE :—**Rice bought Rs. 2,312-9-0, other food grains 630-13-9, cloths 49-5-0, transit 68-7-0, travelling and inspection 166-13-9, equipment 6-10-6, worker's expenses (for 9 workers) 101-12-3, establishment 19-3-6, stationery 5-14-9, postage 25-12-0, printing 6-2-0, pecuniary help 57-8-6, medical relief 8-2-3, agricultural relief 241/-, water scarcity relief 15-4-3, aids for hut building 268/-, test work 0-5-6, sacks 7-13-0, miscellaneous expenses 5-10-0. Total Rs. 3,997-3-0.

**Midnapore Flood Relief Work (from 22nd, August to 17th, November).** Five centres were started from where 2106 mds., 27 seers, of rice, 25 mds., 15 seers, chira and 1 mdl. of salt were distributed to 5218 distressed inhabitants of 110 villages. Also 1405 new cloths and 1971 old cloths were distributed.

**Receipts and Expenditure for the above work :—**

Received by donation Rs. 15,824-13-1½, sale proceeds of sacks and rice etc., 519-4-3, from the Ramkrishna Mission Provident Relief Fund 2,100-3-3. Total 18,444-4-7½.

**EXPENDITURE :—**Rice for distribution bought Rs. 14,700-1-3, other food grains bought 413-2-9, cloths bought 970-12-0, sacks bought 231-2-9, transit charges 610-4-3, travelling and inspection 467-0-6, equipment 223-10-3, worker's expenses (for 20 workers) 619-12-7½, establishment 70-6-9, stationery 11-15-3, postage 70-5-0, pecuniary help 25-9-0, medical help 3/-, miscellaneous expenses 27-2-3. Total Rs. 18,444-4-7½.

This account was audited on the 10th February 1927 and found correct by Mr. N. K. Majumdar, M.A., G.D.A., Govt. Certified Auditor, who is the Hony. Auditor of the Ramkrishna Mission.

We regret that we could not publish this account earlier.

(Sd.) SUDDHANANDA,

The 21st November, 1927.

Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission.

### Nellore Cyclone Relief

Swami Suddhananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, writes :—

The reports of the serious disaster caused by the terrible cyclone which passed over Nellore and its surrounding places have been published in the newspapers. The Ramakrishna Mission from its Madras Branch has started relief work in the affected area. We appeal on behalf of the suffering humanity to the generous public for help. Contributions will be thankfully received by (1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O. & Dist. Hooghly, (2) The Secretary, Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras.

























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